

ONE OF THE HAPPIEST SEASONS OF HER LIFE. — Page 68

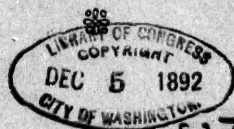
A GENTLE BENEFACTRESS

BY

MRS. J. J. COLTER

Author of

"ONE QUIET LIFE," "ROBBIE MEREDITH," "MEDOLINE
SELWYN'S WORK," "MILDRED KENT'S HERO."



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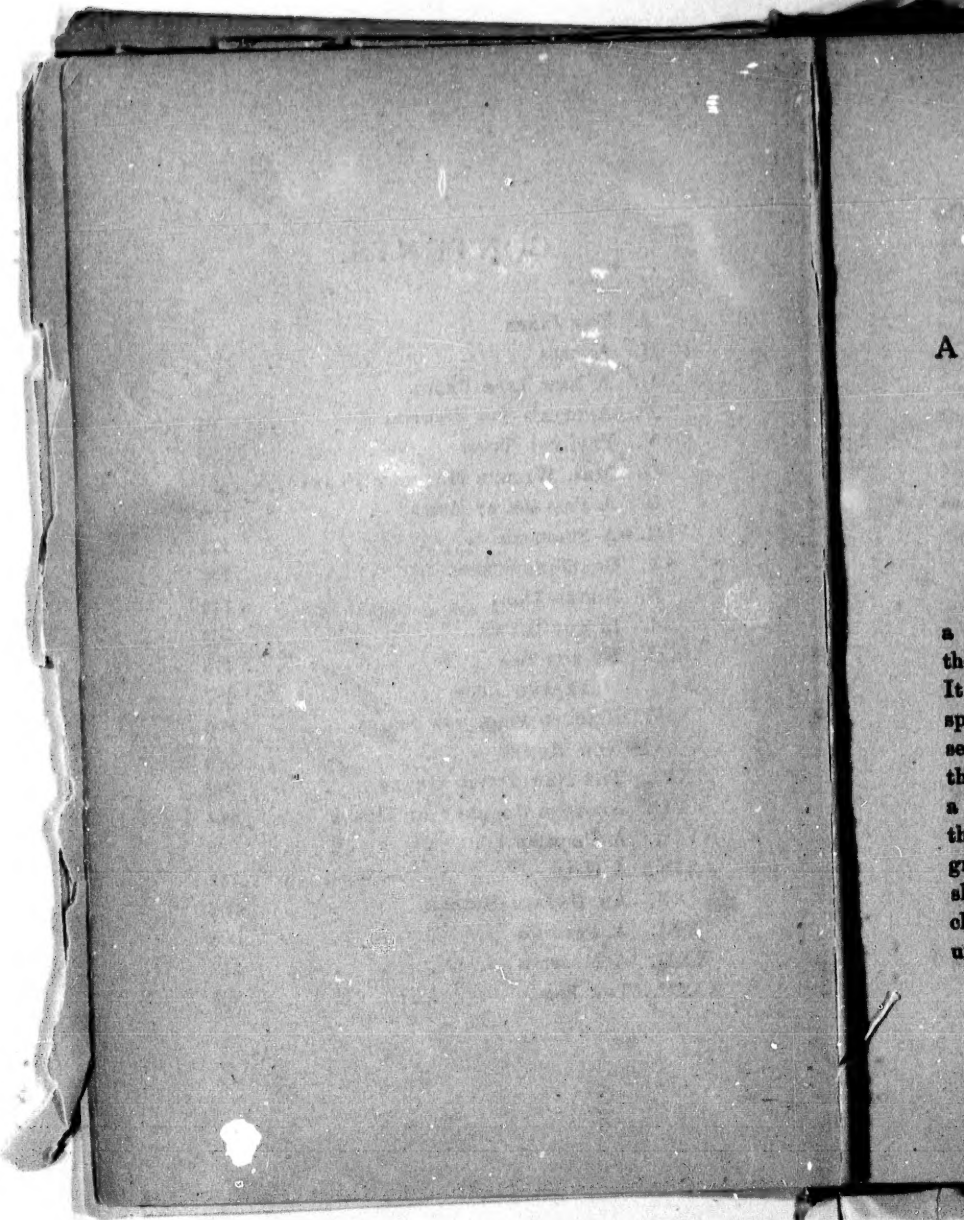
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CONTENTS.

CHAP.	PAGE
I. THE PINES	9
II. ANGELA	29
III. A NEW LIFE BEGUN	43
IV. ANGELA'S TEA PARTIES	61
V. FESTIVAL TIMES	73
VI. MRS. WILBUR MOXTON'S PLANS	91
VII. A PASSAGE AT ARMS	103
VIII. A SURPRISE	114
IX. BOARDING-SCHOOL	133
X. SISTER DORA	144
XI. IN THE SLUMS	163
XII. BY THE SEA	178
XIII. MARK AND LUCY	187
XIV. RESCUED FROM THE SLUMS	206
XV. NEW HOMES	235
XVI. THE NEW DAVID GRANT	249
XVII. ANOTHER JOURNEY OF MERCY	258
XVIII. A PROMISE	269
XIX. A CALL	281
XX. AN UNPAID HELPER	292
XXI. A PARTING	304
XXII. A MEETING	317
XXIII. THE END	326



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A GENTLE BENEFACTRESS.

CHAPTER I.

THE PINES.

ON a gently sloping hill facing the west, stood a roomy, old-fashioned house that had fronted the storms and sunshine for five and forty years. It was inclosed on every side, save a narrow space in front, by great pines that were themselves a part of the forest primeval. Inside their shelter, and directly around the house, was a strip of grass ground, while beyond them on the outside lay smooth, sloping meadows and grain fields, with pasture lands where cows and sheep were feeding ankle deep in grass and clover, for the "Pines" was a farm under an unusually fine state of cultivation, having been

. . .

intelligently managed for two generations. The house was painted a soft tint of gray, that harmonized well with its green setting of grass and foliage, while all around were vines and sweet perfumed flowers that made it a haunt of bird and bee. At the left, as you stood in the doorway, and just within shelter of the towering pines, was a fruit orchard; apples, pears, apricots and plums, hung in rich abundance from the limbs, while here and there a cherry-tree stood shamefacedly amid the clustering richness of the golden autumn days, its own sweetness of fruitage a memory alone.

On the other side of the house was a large garden where the smaller fruits held riot from June till October. Great strawberry beds that harmonized so well with the meek-eyed Alderneys and Jerseys that lay in the sunshine on the other side of the pine-trees, chewing their cuds in drowsy content. At tea-time the strawberry beds and the Alderneys would send in their offerings, making a combination the very immortals might deign to feast upon, if they visited our earth as in the childhood of humanity, when the best the patriarchs had to offer them were veal and short cakes.

The garden was roomy enough not only for

the carmine-tinted strawberries and raspberries, but for the green gooseberries and the varying-tinted currants, the blackberry and all the varieties of vegetable that our zone produces for table use. Long, neatly kept beds were ranged side by side with old-fashioned precision, and with their abundance of fruitage, in the eyes of the practical farmers, were quite as beautiful as the beds overflowing with flowers that lay nearer the house.

The farmers around used to say that the things were so used to growing there, they didn't need much looking after, but the elderly man with iron gray hair and stooping shoulders, who had worked among them from early manhood, would have told you a different story. He was an authority on slugs and grubs and such insignificant creatures which are the torment of full-grown men who, like their forefather Adam, would till the ground and gather the fruits of their labors. The contest seemed an unequal and even ridiculous one; a six-foot man, with all his equipment of brain and physical strength, and an inch-long grub, without any brains to speak of and not a drop of genuine blood in his body; but to his vexation and dismay, the full-grown man was often exasperated to find some pet specimen of plant that

he reckoned might not only garnish the dinner-table, but take a prize at the fair, cut off by the toothless creature, and left lying ignominiously on the mould.

David Wardell had hundreds of times seen his hopes thus defeated, and had waged such long and baffling warfare against the whole tribe of worms in general, that his thoughts had taken a melancholy cast, while his highest flights of fancy were more or less sobered by his tiny enemies. But he was something of a philosopher; the long sunny hours spent among flowers and fruits the summer through, were fertile in suggestions to his mind; the solitude gave him time for reflection, the tender ministries of nature appealed to his imagination, so that while he buried his seeds and afterward watched them develop into such varied and beautiful forms, he had his own thoughts, mostly inarticulate, but with an underflow of beauty in them that often made his heart very glad, he scarce could explain why.

He had a wife, three boys and two girls, who were the special delight of his heart. Looking in their bright faces he could fancy himself back once more with his own brothers and sisters on the Scottish hills where his boyhood was spent.

Often while he was busy thinking of those vanished years and faces, he would break into singing some favorite psalm, making the illusion more complete. He was not much of a talker; probably for that reason his mind was more active; but he was an unusually contented man, for his world was wide, and he went far afield on peaceful excursions while his body was still in the old garden. He lived much more in the past than is usual with people in this busy age, and had therefore with him, about his daily tasks, the haunting presence of those who had long since forsaken the body, and were, for that very reason, nearer to him; their presence more vividly realized than if they still occupied a place on the earth. Dear hands often clasped his as he paused in his labors; voices low and sweet, which only his spirit could strain to hear, revealed to him thoughts of unutterable love and sweetness from far-off realms which no living man has ever visited.

He was in fairly comfortable circumstances — more so perhaps than many a millionaire; his little mistress — for the owner of the Pines was scarcely more than a child — insisted on his making use of all the fruits and vegetables his household might require from her gardens free of charge; his wife was a thrifty woman, who

could make a man comfortable on a very tiny income if need required. He was ambitious to give all his children as good schooling as was possible, but, with his inborn Scottish instinct, one of his lads was destined to have a university training, to become ultimately a preacher of the Gospel, if possible. With this end in view, he studied each little lad intently as they came dropping into the warm home nest. The brightest and handsomest was to be given to this work, for in the heroic days of old, when the tabernacle of the Lord was visibly present among men, the priests called to minister in holy things must be free from blemish — the best representatives of their species.

He liked good books, and could read understandingly the writings of profound thinkers; but for practical, every-day wisdom he came to the Bible for guidance. He read the prophet Daniel's account of the bill of fare on which he and the other two Hebrew youths thrived so well, and substituting the coarser grain of our country for the pulse of Babylon, he had his boys trained hardily to enjoy their oaten cake or porridge twice a day, his fatherly regard for his children overcoming his Scripture belief far enough to allow them to share the savory dinners com-

pounded out of meat and vegetables. The diet agreed with them, for they slipped so easily through the customary disorders of childhood their mother was astonished to find that they scarcely lost a meal's victuals with any of the maladies that well-regulated youths take in turn, before they complete their teens.

There was an excellent library at the Pines, and when his day's work was done, the gardener used to wipe his feet more carefully than usual on the mat at the door, and proceed direct to the library to make his selection, which he did with a care that was very astonishing to Angela, the little mistress of the house, who liked to watch him among the books. He knew and loved nearly all the scores and hundreds of books ranged on those shelves; some of them were old and musty, others in handsome bindings, but he was never influenced by the clothes they wore, for he would as often pass out of the dusky room with some old book pressed tenderly under his arm, printed by hands long since mouldered into dust.

He was not one of those indolent readers who merely skim over sentences, but he tried to assimilate them by making them a part of his own private stores. If the book was worth reading

at all he believed it would pay to linger over it; some of the volumes on those shelves had been read so many times he could well-nigh have produced the author's words if the book had been destroyed. His wife liked to hear him read aloud, and in the long winter evenings her needles gleamed to the rhythm of some fine poem or fascinating history, for she preferred these to the abstract speculations of theologians or philosophers. Many a warm stocking had been fashioned as her busy fancy followed the fate of some great warrior, or statesman in battle, or court intrigue, while for the time being their narrow room widened into a palace, or great battle field, and their humble round of life became a part of some nation's history. The children as they grew older used to plead that their bedtime hour be postponed in order to listen, for their father talked so much to them of these characters who had directed a nation's fate, they felt as if they almost had a claim of kin upon them; but it was a part of his theory for the wise upbringing of his children to send them early to bed, so that when the old clock wheezed out eight the Bible was brought for worship, and they were sent to bed. The house was small and well supplied with cracks, the father's voice was deep and

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clear, and the boys had acute hearing, so that often the story of battle and heroism went on long after the father thought they were asleep.

There was Archie, Andrew and Donald, Jessie and Agnes. Donald had met with an accident when he was little more than a baby, which had left him a trifle lame for life. It had been a bitter grief to the father, for he believed the little lad was originally intended for the David of his flock, chosen like the prophet king of Israel to fill the high office for which, in his own counsels, one of his sons was destined; but no matter how clever the boy was naturally, it was far from his thoughts to offer to God the lame of his flock. In his own mind he had decided to apprentice him to a tailor when he was old enough.

But Donald passed through these early days of youth unconscious of the fate in store for him, and had his own special work mapped out for himself long before most boys of his age have begun to give a serious thought to their special calling. He would sit for hours watching intently insects and creeping things generally, at their business, and could have cried sometimes that his hearing was not acute enough, and his knowledge of their language was so limited that he could not understand them. The ants more

especially interested him in their friendly intercourse, while helping each other at their busy toil, or out of the perplexities to which even ant life is subjected. The father was puzzled as well as distressed at the lad's unaccountable tastes, and received very indifferently his eager descriptions of any beautiful discovery he had made about some hideous, scaly creature that for his own part he could see no use for in creation, and looked upon as another phase of the curse that came through Eve's transgression.

One day Donald learned that books had been written about such small animals and then, for the first time, he realized in its full bitterness what it was to have an empty pocket. He had never been any farther than the kitchen at the Pines, when he was sent there on an occasional errand, but now as he pondered over the fascinating mysteries of bug existence and the light that books might throw upon them, he took his fate in his hand and went in search of the information he desired so hungrily. He hoped it might be Angela, the little mistress of the place, who would come to the door, for she was kind to everything, even the birds who came hopping out of the pine-trees when the ground was covered with snow.

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He went to the front door, his heart thumping loudly enough it seemed to him for any one in the house to hear, without the necessity for him to use the bright knocker that he was not quite sure how he was to operate. While he waited for a few seconds to get some of his scattered self-control collected, he was overjoyed to see the little maiden come around the house with her hands full of flowers. He hurried down the steps greatly relieved that he had not knocked, for if the housekeeper had come to the door expecting to see the minister or some grown up person, it was just within the possibilities that she might box his ears.

"Were you trying to get in the house?" Angela asked when he came to her side and stood looking very much like a culprit.

"Would you lend me a book that tells about bugs and things?"

His heart felt lighter as soon as he had spoken, while the blood that had been about his head and neck in superfluous quantities began to settle back in its accustomed channels.

"What a funny sort of book that would be; nobody surely could find out enough about them to make into a book."

"Yes, they could; you have no idea how much

they know and how smart they are. "But will you let me have the book? I won't hurt it."

Angela looked at him intently, the pleading expression of his face forcing back the merry words that were on her lips.

"Do you really care enough to waste your time reading about them?"

"It's not a waste; I'd rather read about them than anything."

"Would you mind helping to hunt for it? I do not know if there is such a queer book in the library. I do not think my papa cared for such small animals."

"I wish you could see them as I have, you'd think for their size they were ahead of most everybody."

Donald was brightening up unexpectedly, for he felt sure that among such quantities of books as his father said there were in that library, there would be at least one about those clever little creatures that built their own houses, and made excavations that a practical engineer might copy to advantage.

"We will go in and I will show you how to read the backs of the books, and I will help you look." She looked regretfully at the flowers; she had picked them for a special purpose and it

was something of a denial to lay them aside in order to gratify a boy's foolish whim.

They went in at the front door, Donald looking around him with a mixture of admiration and awe that Angela did not notice. The house looked very plain and old-fashioned to her, but to Donald it was a revelation of beauty, for he had nothing in his experience with which to compare it, save his own humble home or neighboring cottages, equally simple in adornment and architecture. They went through the dimly lighted parlor, a large room whose walls were covered with pictures, and brackets on which were ranged bronze statuary, old Worcester and Wedgewood ware, that had come across the sea two generations ago, with Parian and other exquisite vases and busts that in some mysterious way touched the lad's poetic nature. He forgot his errand as he stood gazing about wistfully, Angela, meanwhile, watching him curiously.

"Do you like old things?" she asked at last.

"Are these old?"

"Yes; nearly everything here is very old; my grandmamma had them when she was married, and some of them were old when she got them. I like new things; these make me melancholy."

"I would liked to have had a grandmother

like that; these are better than new things; they make me think of" — he stopped abruptly.

"What do they make you think of?" Angela asked.

"I cannot just tell you, only it seems as if I had lived among such things long ago. I have the same feeling sometimes when I am watching the bugs; as if I knew a great deal about them away down in my heart — had known it, but forgot." He turned away as if half-angry with himself for making the confession.

"What an odd boy you are. I never have such thoughts; but I wish that you had my grandmother for yours, too, then when we are grown up you might have all these things and I could get new ones; but I cannot give them away to strangers, because my papa said they were heirlooms, and I must keep them to give my children if I ever have any — you know I am the last one of a very old family; papa told me once we were an ancient family when we joined the Crusades. Such things are very tiresome; I would so much rather be a new family and not know if I had any one behind me but my father and mother." Angela looked around at the portraits on the wall gazing down at her, and turned to lead the way into the library.

"You may come here sometime when they are all away and look at everything as long as you please. Lindsay don't like boys around—she says they are a nuisance; but I don't think nice ones are."

There was a curtained recess formed of a beautiful piece of tapestry made by some long gone ancestress of Angela's, which led from the parlor into the library. The two rooms occupied the whole of one side of the lower story of the house, making them, because of their unusual size, seem like a church to the boy who had never, with those deep, curious eyes of his, seen anything like it before.

"These are the books. It will take us a long time to go over them. If you were only my brother or cousin now you could have the most of them." She spoke regretfully; plainly she would have felt it a relief to share her belongings with this penniless lad. "I wonder what the name of the book will be. Papa always kept each kind of books by themselves; we can skip theology and poetry, for they can't possibly have anything to do with bugs and such things. Now is there anything else we might skip?" she asked doubtfully.

"Certainly there is; history and astronomy

and everything in grammar and arithmetic," Donald said encouragingly, his eyes meanwhile devouring the great loaded book shelves.

"Dear me! what a tiresome world it is; one can never get to the end of learning. Do you like to study?" Angela asked.

"Yes, if I could study the right kind of things; but they make you keep going over what has no sense in it so much of the time, and what you would like best to be learning about they never teach you at all."

"I don't care much to learn about anything. I like to feed animals and make folks happy, especially children; and I like to visit poor people and take them nice things to eat; but there are so few around here. I think it is a great waste of time to make all of us study; now I would be satisfied to know how to read and write and do my own accounts, and have enough geography and grammar to do me nicely; but I would never touch music, or painting, or the languages only my own, and those tiresome sciences; but they tell me I must do them because of my position; and so I sit moping in the schoolroom with my governess when I would be so much better out of doors helping things and people to be happy." She sighed wearily; how

happy she might have been — according to her own view of life — in one of those islands lying amid the summer seas, where the children have no knowledge of the torturing pains that growth of knowledge causes.

"If the teacher was any good I would rather go to school than do anything; but our teacher is a girl, and she don't know much more than a cow about what is worth knowing, except a little book knowledge, like arithmetic and grammar. Why, she screamed when I showed her a great beauty of a beetle, and scolded me for bringing it to school in my pocket. What's the good of such women to teach boys!"

"I don't like beetles either," Angela said.

"Not the great striped ones an inch long?" Donald asked incredulously.

"Well, no; the bigger they are the more nasty they seem."

"I guess girls never amount to much; they are only good to look at."

Donald gazed with a mixture of admiration and contempt at his girl friend as he spoke, meanwhile wondering, no doubt, why the Lord made them so simple, and yet so beautiful, for Angela was certainly a very fair specimen of girlhood.

"They are made for a great deal more than to be looked at. I don't think you would be much if it hadn't been for your mother, and she grew out of a girl — women are just girls ripened." Angela began her defense angrily, but her sunny temper gained the mastery, and her sentence ended with a smile. "We won't argue about it any longer, but look instead for your book. Lindsay may be in presently, and she thinks boys are not much."

"Why don't you get a better-natured woman?"

"Papa told me always to keep Lindsay. She was housekeeper here before my mamma came. I am the only baby she ever had of her own."

"You weren't her baby."

"Yes; she took care of me ever since I was born. My mamma never saw me, and I never saw her — only her picture. Won't you come and see it? you will think she was good for something."

"Yes; if you want me to I will look at her; but I don't care much for womenkind, they are frightened of everything."

"I am not easily frightened."

"Will you come with me some day and watch the bugs?" Donald asked eagerly.

"Yes; if you want me to very much."

She spoke hesitatingly.

"You will be sure to like it if once you got to know them; no one seems to understand about them, and I'd be glad if you would."

"I will try," she said faintly.

They had re-entered the parlor, and were standing before a massive gilt frame that inclosed a face and form beautiful enough to have responded to an angel's name.

"That is my mother."

Donald stood silently looking at the picture after Angela had spoken. New thoughts were working swiftly in his keen brain. It was a revelation to him — this sweet vision of womanhood which the artist had caught and idealized.

"I did not know flesh and bones could be made up to look like that; your father must have felt awfully to have her go away from him forever."

"It was only for ten years, then he followed her. Just when he was between the two worlds he looked up so brightly; as if he saw something that made him so glad; and then he said, 'Angela — my wife.' My parents were both the real sort of Christians, so Lindsay says, that one never has any doubts about."

Donald turned abruptly away. Angela chanced

to look at him after the book hunting had begun, and saw tears in his eyes. From that moment a new bond of union sprang up between them.

The search for the book after that went on diligently, but it failed to turn up; at nightfall they ceased, but Angela invited him to come the next day, which he promised to do, and then he went away with a world of new thoughts in his heart.

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CHAPTER II.

ANGELA.

THE book so greatly desired by the boy naturalist was certainly on those shelves, and not one book alone, but several; while near where he stood during part of his search, was a cabinet that would have thrilled his soul much as a splendid painting or sublime harmony might have done the boyish hearts of Raphael or Beethoven.

Angela's grandfather had been a dilettante in several things, bugs and insects being one of his amusements. He had found in his own searches in many climes some fine specimens; others he had secured in other ways, but a specimen once procured had never been lost, and that sunny summer afternoon when the boy and girl stood in the cool, shaded room, those hundreds of creeping things looked just as fresh and well preserved as they did seventy years before, so long outlasting the hands that imprisoned them.

But neither Donald nor Angela was aware of what that ebony cabinet contained; the key of it was one of many on a ring that lay in a secret drawer of her father's desk, and she was possessed of such an incurious nature respecting the treasures of a past generation that she had never turned a single key; indeed she shrank from exhuming these locked-up relics of the past; probably a general destruction by fire of the entire house would have been something of relief to her.

The twilight was filling the room with shadows the second day, and Donald's courage was beginning to fail along with Angela's patience, for she found it very tiresome going over the long names on the backs of the books, while she was too tender-hearted to leave the lad alone in that room so full to her of haunting shadows; at the same time she kept wearily speculating upon what could have possessed so many people in other days to waste so much good time in bookwriting. She had come herself of a scholarly, cultured race, but somehow her little personality had been caught in the rebound, and by some means or other she was free from the slightest morbid taint of literary ambition. To be amid the activities of life, cheering the sorrowful and mak-

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ing still happier the glad-hearted, was her delight; while she scarcely gave a thought as to whether she would be remembered a month or ten centuries after her eyes closed eternally on earthly things. To make the very best of each passing day, without worrying about the future or regretting the deeds of the past, was her instinctive habit. Whether this was a desirable frame of mind to possess each one must decide for himself. An exclamation of passionate delight from Donald startled her.

"What is it?" she asked, hastening to his side.

"Just look at these beauties!" The boy had carried the book to the deep window seat, and was bending over it with dilating eyes. "I did not know there were such glorious creatures in the world," he cried.

Angela stooped down to gain a better look, but turned away with an exclamation of disgust.

"Do you call those dreadful things glorious?" she asked. "They are perfectly—hideous." She hesitated a moment before finishing the sentence; Donald was so charmed with his discovery she hardly liked to criticise the creatures too severely, but he was too much absorbed in them to heed her criticisms.

He turned back presently to the shelf. "This is the third volume; there must be others here."

"What can they have found in those crawling things to write three great books about?" she asked half-angrily.

The library was growing so dusky in the more distant spaces that Angela was getting slightly nervous there alone with Donald. He soon found the missing volumes, and glancing ruefully at the handsome binding he said anxiously: "Should you care if I took all three of them? I don't know how I could wait till to-morrow afternoon to see them all."

"Why, certainly you can take them all; I think you have earned them pretty dearly. I will go with you and carry one of them until we get out of sight of the house. If Lindsay saw you she might take two of them; she is so careful of everything papa left me."

Donald sped down the meadow path so swiftly Angela found some difficulty in keeping pace with him. "Your lameness doesn't hinder you getting over the ground pretty fast," she panted at last, considerably out of breath.

"Oh! my lameness doesn't amount to anything. One leg is just a little shorter than the other, that's all."

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He spoke with a sublime indifference about his misfortune. A few inches more or less of bone and tissue were hardly worth mentioning when he had those three volumes in his possession.

"Your father, though, is very sorry about it. He was going to make you a scholar and preacher if it hadn't been for that."

"He make me a preacher," he echoed indignantly; "it is only the Lord who can do that. I would never be a man-made preacher; I'd be a tailor first, and sit on a bench and sew, like a woman."

"Your father told me he was going to apprentice you to a tailor. He says it is a very good way to make a living, and tailors sometimes get rich."

"I don't want to be rich; I mean to study all my life, and find out about things. I can build a cabin in the woods, and raise what I want to eat; no man shall make me a tailor."

"Perhaps if I talk to your father he won't insist on it; he generally does things I want him to." Angela tried to speak consolingly.

"You only ask him to do things for you, and it is his duty to please you, but this is different."

"You shall not be a tailor, and if you want to

you may study all your life." She spoke with a vehemence unusual to her. Through his uncovered soul she had caught a glimpse of such dismay and grief mirrored in those deep, hazel eyes, that all her combativeness was roused, and for the first time in her life she realized how grand it was to have power. If Donald loved books as well as she loved sunshine and companionship of birds and flowers and human beings, how cruel it would be to force him away from these just to make money, especially when he was content to live so simply in a little republic of his own, like those grand old heathen that she had been compelled to study about. Maybe some day in the far, lonely future, children at school might be studying about Donald. A new thought came: Mightn't it be an act of cruelty to add anything further to the burdens already awaiting those unborn children, since there were already entirely too many things for them to learn about? She thought the matter over as they stood leaning against the fence.

"Should you be likely to write books if you get the chance to study?" she asked anxiously.

"I might. One never knows what thoughts may come to them when they give themselves up entirely to thinking."

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"I think there are plenty of books now, and it seems a great pity to have many more great men for poor children to have to study about. In a thousand years more if people keep on being celebrated it will be just too dreadful for them. I am very glad I have been sent here so soon. I would, if I could have had my choice, have come about four thousand years ago. It must have been lovely then for children, for they lived out of doors most of the time, and I can't seem to find out much about girls going to school in those days."

"But if your mind was full of thoughts, and some of them which no one had ever thought of before shouldn't you want to keep them in the world?"

"I am never troubled with such thoughts, and I think there are a great plenty of written thoughts already; but, Donald, I will help you. I shall be a woman before your books get written, so I won't have to read them; and the children in those times must just look out for themselves."

With this comforting promise Angela gave Donald the book and said good-night. He rushed home, and with a sigh of satisfaction that an aged Sybarite might envy, sat down by the evening lamp, and in the few short moments

before bedtime came, learned more than many a boy of his age, whose heart was not in the work, would have done in a month.

Angela kept her promise, and the following morning while the dew lay sparkling on blade and leaf, she picked her way carefully along the path that led to the garden, and going to David opened out on the subject with charming directness. Her father had trained her to a transparent openness of character, so that it was simply impossible for her to go about anything in an indirect way.

"I want you to let Donald be a student. You must never ask him to be a tailor." There was an unconscious imperiousness about her speech that nettled the elderly man whom she addressed.

"You must remember, Miss Angela, that Donald belongs to me. Your authority over me ends at your gate."

"But, Wardell, don't I belong to you, too?" she pleaded, all her natural softness of manner coming back to her. "You have always called me your little maid."

"Well, yes; especially since your father died you have seemed as near to me, I believe, as one of my own; at least I would defend your life or character the same as my own." He was not

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proof against her blandishments; in fact few were.

"And you know I am just as much interested in your getting on well as if you were my own father."

"I know that you are as kind to me as if you were my child." His voice grew husky, for this strong, grave man loved the bright-haired, gentle girl deeply.

"I have been told that I am rich — have a great many thousands of dollars laid away against I come of age; now I want to educate Donald. I don't like studying one bit; I haven't very many brains I guess, so it is not worth my while trying to be great when it is not in me to be, and if you would give me Donald, why, he could study for both of us; and you have no idea what a relief it would be to me. He can come every day and study with me now. I heard teacher say the other day she was just rusting out for something to do, and she is a very fine scholar — knows as much as a man."

There was no resisting the pleading eloquence in those lovely eyes that looked like tiny bits of the blue sky just rain washed and perfectly clear and pure. David worked away vigorously. Angela noticed that he was destroying other

things than the weeds with his hoe, but he maintained an ominous silence.

"Then you won't do it for me?" She spoke sorrowfully. When, to her vast surprise, she saw a teardrop come pattering down on a turnip leaf, it gave her great encouragement, and she stood very patiently waiting further developments. He cleared his throat rather tremulously at last, and turning his face persistently in an opposite direction, he said: "What will Longhurst people say if I let you help us — I mean if we let Donald come to school with you? If he is to be a scholar he must work his own way up with what I can do for him."

"Papa never cared very much for Longhurst, and we don't really live there. Longhurst is half a mile from our gate." She gave a little cough. "My feet are damp, and I must not stay here much longer. Say you will let Donald come, and I will go right down and tell him to come to school to-day."

"Wait for another day; I must think it over. You do not understand, my child; one must not do anything that means the changing of an entire life at a few moments' notice."

"But when the change is a wise one it is right. To-morrow you will let Donald come?"

"To-morrow is Saturday; from what he is finding in those books I doubt if he won't be spending the hours from dawn to sundown in the woods. He was up and away by four this morning, and he hadn't come to his breakfast when I left."

"And you would make that boy a tailor? He on you! as Lindsay says to me when I am naughty. I believe grown-up people are just as willful as children." With which rebellious remark Angela left Wardell to his own reflections. But they were not painful ones. The vista Angela had unconsciously opened to him that morning led out farther than any horizons our earth embraces.

Long ago he had had his own thoughts about Donald's strange fancies; neither was he so absorbed in divinity or history as to be ignorant of the fact that many a lad no higher in the social scale than a gardener's son had come to take rank among the high priests of literature and science, winning a name far outshining the princelings of their time; what if some such fate awaited his own little lad? His heart gave a great throb, and for a few seconds he stood looking up into the deep blue of the summer's sky. God might accept the lad he had so longed to consecrate to

him for other service than that of preaching to men and women; there might be other work he wanted the lad to do. Some day if Donald was permitted to take his own way in the special work for which he had such a passionate love, he might go farther into God's thoughts in that one branch of creation than any one who had preceded him; some day in the far future, when he himself had finished the life work with which he had been entrusted, around other cottage firesides the story of Donald's discoveries might be repeated, his struggles and triumphs—the father's name, too, not forgotten, for men like to know something of the fathers of their great ones. David, like most, had the desire strong within him to be remembered on earth long after he had ascended to higher scenes and employments.

He worked that day in a dream, pitying the self of yesterday which had not known the possibilities awaiting his boy, but he held himself resolutely to the duty of the hour, and not till he heard the summons of the dinner horn from his own doorway, floating unmusically up through the fragrant air, did he lay down his hoe and make the possibility an assured fact by going directly to Angela and accepting her generous offer. He was hoping to find her out in the rose

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garden — one of her favorite haunts — so that he would not need to ask for an interview alone, or else speak before Lindsay, but Angela being herself in a somewhat anxious state of mind, had got excused from school earlier than usual, and was hovering around outdoors waiting to waylay him.

She heard him coming, and concealing herself behind a great rose bush lest he might take another course in order to avoid her, she waited until he was just beside her. The look of satisfaction on his face when she stepped out and confronted him was reassuring.

"Have you been thinking any more about Donald?" she asked anxiously.

"I have thought of nothing else since you left me."

She interrupted him, afraid to hear what the outcome of so much thinking might be, and anxious to intercede still further, but she had scarcely begun to speak when he went on with a solemnity of manner that was a trifle alarming.

"I believe, Miss Angela, the good God put that thought into your heart. It has seemed to me for a good while that you lived nearer to the angels and the King himself, than most of us."

"Then you are going to let Donald be a natu-

ralist? Miss Buckingham says that is probably what he will be."

"I will let him be just what the Lord wants to make him. Maybe he will be as good as a preacher some day. I have always wanted a son to stand in the pulpit and speak the thoughts that were too deep for me to utter—to be a grand minister that men would listen to with reverence, and flock to hear."

"I think probably the Lord was not certain but you might be vain of such a son; you know he abhors the proud heart as well as the proud look."

David regarded her almost reverently, and then turning away murmured softly, "A little child shall lead them."

Angela followed him.

"Won't you let me tell Donald first?" she asked. "I like to see the light come into his eyes when he is very glad."

"Yes; you may tell him," was the low-spoken answer.

CHAPTER III.

A NEW LIFE BEGUN.

THE hours wore slowly away that afternoon to Angela. It was a genuine pleasure to her to go down to the Wardells' cottage at any time. There was a homeliness about the bright, clean rooms that she fancied did not exist to the same degree anywhere else upon earth, and an hour spent there left her both glad and sad. She would very cheerfully have exchanged her own large, richly furnished abode, so melancholy and lonely as it was, for this crowded but happy home, and if she had been of a philosophic turn of mind she would no doubt have questioned the wisdom of going there at all, since a visit always left her somewhat sad-hearted as she wended her way homeward. Lindsay would have rejoiced at anything destroying the charm that small house held for her beloved child, while she laid every possible objection in the way of her going there.

but Angela was clever at contriving errands, and the grim housekeeper loved the girl so well she could not find it in her heart to refuse her request occasionally.

After the invitation for Donald to come to school had been given and accepted, Angela thought herself it might be necessary to secure her teacher's consent to the arrangement, and all that afternoon while her thoughts should have been intent on her lessons they were really trying to frame a suitable way to proffer her request; but she was not an adept at framing petitioning sentences, so that when the last moment came she was no nearer the solution of her difficult task than at noontime.

"You have been very inattentive to your lessons to-day, Angela," was the teacher's reproof when school hours were ended. "I am beginning to think it is not right for me to spend my time over such an indifferent student."

Angela's face lighted up suddenly.

"I am so glad to hear you say so," she replied, "for I want Donald Wardell to come to school to you; he is going to be a great man some day, and you won't feel any more as if you were wasting your time."

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"No one has said so but myself. You will be willing if I promise to study a great deal harder; please let me tell him to come."

"But, my child, what will people say? he is merely a farm lad — just a common boy."

"No, indeed; he is very uncommon. There is not such another boy in Longhurst — not very many, I think, in the world; for God don't make many of that kind."

Miss Buckingham smiled.

"If all the world were like you it would be a more comfortable place for the ones who have brains; they seem to be your aristocracy."

"Then you will let me tell him to come; I am sure I can learn better if there is some one studying with me," she pleaded.

"I shall be very glad to have any one study with you if it will only waken you up."

"I am wide awake all the time," said Angela, "but you know there is not a great deal in me to get wakened. It is no use for me to study a great deal since I cannot make a great scholar. I just want to be happy and make others happy; that is all the mission I have to perform."

"I have grave doubts about that, Angela," said the teacher. "You have more original thoughts than almost any one I know. Such

thoughts do not usually accompany lack of brain power. If you would only try, I believe you would surprise us all."

"Perhaps I will when Donald comes. I am going down there now, and won't you please to tell Lindsay what we are going to do?"

"May I put all the blame on you then?"

"Yes; and won't you please tell her at once? I will stay a while with Mrs. Wardell, and when I come back the worst of her temper will be over — it generally works off in an hour or two."

Angela did not wait for a reply. She went first to the garden for the flowers, for it was a custom with her never to go among her friends without bringing an offering of some sort by way of insuring a welcome — perhaps it was, however, that her nature was so large and generous it pained her not to have something to bestow when she went among her friends.

She walked along slowly; she was not anxious to return until Lindsay's temper had got done fermenting, and it was just possible she might not find Donald at home, since his excursions seemed to have taken wider ranges of late. Her heart was unusually light as she made her way slowly through budding leaves and flowers, the westering sun shedding his glory over all.

"What a nice world it is," she murmured, pausing to look over the fair landscape stretching beyond her. "What a pity one has to die and leave it all."

Standing there in the midsummer sunshine she shivered, as if suddenly a blast from winter had swept up from Antarctic wastes, for suddenly the thought of her own father and the fair-faced mother lying under the mould, came to her. She stood meditatively by the gate looking down at the ground; to think that one day her own soft white flesh should mingle with that, become a part of it, seemed too dreadful.

"I wonder what has made me think of such things when I was so happy?" she said aloud, and mentally shaking herself for such folly; she raised her head, her eyes falling for an instant on the rich coloring and satin petals of the perfumed flowers in her hands. "They came from the ground; some day I will come from it too, and be so beautiful." She paused, arrested by a new, thrilling thought, while her eyes were lifted higher—even to the far, delicious blue of the arching heavens above her. "I forgot the resurrection and Heaven and God. I will be one of Christ's own little ones."

She stood gazing up solemnly, perhaps never

before realizing as at that moment, how real Heaven is, and God and all the great life, throbbing, pulsating with bliss beyond that blue vault.

"I will just give myself to the Lord now," she continued. "I promised my father that I would be good and seek the Lord, and I have not done it yet. I never realized before how I was to do it."

She knelt down, still clasping the flowers, and lifting the sweet, pure face to God, made her act of consecration. When at last she arose from her knees Fra Angelico might have copied her face for one of his angels. She went on her way feeling so glad in the thought that now she belonged to the Lord, and feeling too that she must go softly on her way through life as became one of Christ's little ones.

Arrived at the cottage she gave her flowers to Agnes, who had seen her coming and was waiting for her at the door. When she entered the house she found Mrs. Wardell sitting at her sewing in the spotless kitchen. She was one of those perfect housekeepers that never permitted things to get into disorder, no matter what the emergency, and Angela, who was keenly sensitive to all subtle influences, fairly reveled in the home comfort and cleanliness of that tiny cottage.

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"I came to see Donald," were her first words. She then hastened to explain her errand. A joy needlessly withheld was merely defrauding the person to whom by right it belonged of that amount of pleasure for the time being, and life is so brief, and joy so limited it is cruel to cheat any one of their rightful share of it.

"He is beyond, in the keeping-room, studying the books you loaned him; the lad is fair daft about wee, creeping things."

The mother spoke fretfully. She was a large-hearted woman, possessed of a vigorous but untrained intellect, and was willing that her children should have their hobbies, but this one of Donald's was so ridiculous she could see no sense whatever in permitting him indulgence in it.

"Miss Buckingham thinks he may become a great naturalist," speaking proudly, but Mrs. Wardell was not versed in scientific phraseology.

"He seems to be that now; only that I know the lad is not deficient in wit I'd be as frightened and sure of it as your teacher."

"But a naturalist is a man who studies about the things that Donald is so interested in; I hunted the word up in the dictionary."

"May be so; but in Scotland we used to call a daft person a natural."

"I expect he will write books some day, about bugs and such small animals; you will be proud of him then."

"I doubt if any one would buy his books—most folks get more of bugs than they want without having to read about them."

"I cannot explain to you, but I feel sure Donald is going to be somebody in particular," Angela said stoutly, while she closed the argument by going into the keeping-room and closing the door behind her. All her sympathies were aroused for the boy who received so little of that soothing article in his own home.

He did not notice her entrance. On the table before him he had some large, unhappy-looking creatures pinned securely to a bit of shingle, and was apparently absorbed in studying their characteristics; the book was open at his side, and excellent likenesses of the same creeping things adorned its pages.

"O, Donald! what have you there?" Angela asked, with a shudder.

He turned to her with an abstracted air. "I found them in the Giffen swamp to-day; are they not beauties?"

"Did you walk all the way there and back?" she asked, with amazement.

"Pretty nearly all the way; I got a ride for a mile or so," he answered indifferently.

"Why, it must have been a dozen miles there and back."

"Yes; but what does that matter when I got these?"

"Are they any good?"

"Good! I should say they were. I mean to know all about them before I am done with them. This book don't just tell the truth, I am thinking, but then, I don't know anything of Latin, and that may be what deceives me. There is some of that stuff here. One thing, if I ever did write a book it should all be in the same language." He sighed heavily.

"I have been studying Latin for more than a year; perhaps I could tell you what it means." He pointed out the place hopefully, but, alas, she could only translate a few of the easy words, leaving him as much mystified as ever.

"Never mind, Donald; you are to come to the Pines on Monday, to study with me. I got your father's consent first, and then Miss Buckingham's, so now you are on the road to be a great man."

"I don't want to be a great man, they are so

bothered with people running after them, and then they have other worries that don't pay. All I want is plenty of books and a house to keep them in, away in the woods where I would never be interrupted, and could find specimens."

"You would need to do something to earn money; one can't do without victuals and clothes."

"I could hire out for a few days now and then, and earn what little money I would need."

"You would never do any good to anybody just living that way."

"But I would study about these all the time; you have no idea how much there is to learn."

"You do not seem a bit glad about coming to school," Angela said sorrowfully.

"But I am glad; more so than I can tell you; and if you really want me to write a book when I know enough I will try. I will do that or any thing to please you that is possible for me."

There was a quiver in the boyish voice that touched Angela deeply. She made up her mind to overcome her repugnance to Donald's treasures, and, if possible, get interested in them herself, so with this laudable end in view she seated herself beside him. The muscles of her face, however, were soon working in sympathy with

the feeble efforts of his prisoners to free themselves; her pity at last overcame her anxiety to be a help rather than hinderance to him.

"Why do you treat them so cruelly? Don't you know it is torture to them to be pinned to that shingle?"

"I don't think so. They are so small, and have so little blood, they cannot have much feeling."

"But they have nerves and sensation just as much in proportion to their size as either of us. Please don't fasten them that way any more."

"But what shall I do with them while I am studying about them?"

"Put them in a box," was the triumphant reply.

"They would crawl out in no time, or else go to killing each other."

"You couldn't glue them, could you?" she said hesitatingly.

"I will have to impale them for a while yet; you know they used to treat the martyrs that way."

Angela watched them pitifully, her sympathies divided over the sorrows of the poor, vanished martyrs and Donald's prisoners.

"Are you not afraid God will be angry with

you? He loves everything he has made — beetles, and martyrs, and all of us."

"I have my doubts about these chaps; some way I think they just grew, as Topay said. Now, do you think yourself the Lord would think about them while he was making worlds and great oceans and mountains?"

"Nobody else could make them, and you know they never made themselves; nobody ever sees things getting made that way — half-finished animals or birds crawling around; beside the Bible says creeping things, don't you remember in the first chapter of Genesis?"

Donald slowly released his captives and got an empty collar box in which to secure them. Then he settled down again to his interrupted work, and after a few minutes Angela painfully realized that she was of less consequence to him just then than those hideous creatures who, no doubt, were making the empty spaces of the box ring with their cries of rage and despair if only she had octaves of hearing high enough for her to hear them. She slipped out of the room slightly chagrined, but also relieved to find that he did not seem to want her help. Ancient history, or even arithmetic would be sunshine and rose bloom compared with the study of those nasty creatures.

Janet and Agnes were always delighted to have a visit from Angela, apart from the good things she brought them. They had not got beyond the rag baby period of their existence, and, although Angela had some time ago ceased to cherish any special fondness for dolls, she could enter very heartily into the little girls' pleasures in this respect. They had quite a family of children, the maternal instinct being strong in them, and having deft fingers for such small girls, they added to their family as the exigencies of the case required. A bit of bleached cotton, a touch of Donald's water colors, and some bits of calico were sufficient at any time to set up a separate doll life. They had fertile imaginations, and as a result of this gift many a rag baby was mouldering in the ground, the victim of measles or consumption or a fatal accident—a catastrophe that duplicated some happening in Longhurst or their own neighborhood.

Angela preferred weddings to funerals, and she seldom spent an hour there without one of these festive occurrences taking place. But to-day she felt a more womanly instinct throbbing in her heart. She wanted to talk to Mrs. Wardell; to tell her about Donald and to get her interested in the lad's pursuits—the latter a task

more difficult than she expected. She furthermore wished to consult her about bestowing on him the severe mental training that she had herself expected to suffer from; it would be so much better if she could lay the money out on him instead, making him, in a way, her proxy. But Mrs. Wardell was very wary and circumspect in her remarks, giving her no encouragement to expect that her help would be accepted further than in taking lessons from Miss Buckingham.

"You must not think because we do not accept your generous offer, my dear, that we're ungrateful; that will never be; but you are not much more than a child yet, and by the time the lad is ready for college your mind may change. When you get into long frocks you won't come dropping in here like one of my own; a great change generally takes place between the girl and woman. The girl can be friendly with them beneath her when the woman can't; and we'd be the last to try to hold you to promises made before you were old enough to know better. Poor people has their pride as well as the rich."

Angela looked grieved, but she seemed to think it useless to argue the matter, yet all the same she had her mind made up that the girl Angela should be reproduced in the woman. She was

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silent for some time, and then in a quiet way said:

"Don't you think it is sad for a person when there is no one near enough to them to be helped? I wonder if the Lord isn't sorry sometimes for the lonely ones, especially when they are so anxious to help others?"

Mrs. Wardell shot her a keen glance from beneath her strong eyebrows, but Angela was smoothing out the tangled curls of a waxen dollie she had given Agnes one Christmas, her face looking about as innocent as the doll's.

"If we are anxious to be of use in the world the Lord is certain to give us the chance to be so; he never wastes anything. It's only poor useless creatures who can't create that dares to be wasteful."

"I wish when it is so easy to create people there had been some made for me; if I only had a brother now to help I would be willing to go without myself to give to him, especially the privilege of studying," she said, with a smile. It was impossible for her to be melancholy for any length of time, and then, to-day she was having so much to make her happy. The peace that had come so sweetly as well as strangely into her heart a short time before, when in her

act of consecration she gave herself to God, was still with her. She questioned anxiously with herself if she should tell Mrs. Wardell about it. That good woman looked so grim and strong she could not help wondering if she had ever felt the necessity of going to a stronger power than her own firm will; if she had ever taken her ignorant, finite heart to God to be made wise, to be fashioned, controlled by him.

"Can we give ourselves to God when we are children? Do you think, now, that I could be a Christian?" she asked timidly.

"Why, certainly you could. Don't you remember the Lord said himself when he was on earth, 'Suffer the little children to come unto me'? and he never changes. It's better to come then than when you are older."

"Well, I gave myself to Him to-day, and I feel ever so much safer and happier since." She spoke with a frankness that made the hard lines about Mrs. Wardell's mouth relax, but she put a restraint on herself and forced back the smile that was lurking there.

"You must not deceive yourself and take up with a false hope. One can't be too careful in these matters that concern the soul and eternity."

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I told him I wasn't good, especially that I did not like to study, but if he would take me for his child I would just do what he wanted me to."

She spoke as calmly on the subject of her experience, and with an assurance that a gray-haired professor of sanctification might covet.

"I always thought it would be such hard work to get converted," she continued. "The minister says we must agonize, but I do not think there is any need for agony to come near to Christ. Why, he just seems the same as my own father used to. I always felt that he loved me, and that he wanted me to love him. There was no agony about that; and it is just the same way with Christ. Why, I love to sit here and talk with you about it."

The doll lay forgotten on her lap, while with clasped hands and rapt, upturned face she talked of the blessed experience which had just burst upon her.

Mrs. Wardell's face was becoming graver, while there was a suspicion of tears in her eyes as she worked silently. Perhaps her voice was too unsteady for speech; perhaps the child's experience had so far outstripped her own she dare not make confession of her slowness of growth in spiritual things.

"I hope you will continue steadfast," she said at last.

"Why, of course I will, now that I have got in the right way."

There was surprise in the sweetly modulated voice; Angela had yet to learn many things about the experience of old professors.

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CHAPTER IV.

ANGELA'S TEA PARTIES.

ANGELA went home in the gloaming that evening, in a very contented frame of mind even for her, since she usually found far more of sweet than bitter in her allotments. Very rarely she staid to have tea with the Wardells, and these were the most satisfactory tea drinkings she ever had, as well as the most simple. The ancient china that had come safely across the ocean with Mrs. Wardell when she was an infant in arms, was brought out from its hiding-place, carefully washed and placed on a tablecloth so perfectly laundried it might have been the admiration of a Chinaman. Then, no other person's bread had just such a flavor as Mrs. Wardell's; her scones were irresistible, while her jams surpassed even Lindsay's.

Angela used to linger lovingly over these tea drinkings. The tea itself was certainly very

weak, since she was not permitted a free use of that beverage, but the great flakes of cream floating on top, and the mixture sweetened with such wise discrimination -- a single grain added or taken away would have marred its perfection -- left her nothing further to desire.

Beside this elegant repast had the added charm of delightful conversation: even the cat used to sit on the floor by Mrs. Wardell's chair, and in the pauses of conversation her voice could be distinctly heard purring her satisfaction. The children were encouraged to talk, but the subjects of conversation were limited to agreeable topics; neither were they permitted to spice it with gossip. Wardell, in many ways, might have sat for a portrait of one of the old patriarchs who journeyed to and fro on the fresh-made world, so uncompromising was he in matters of conscience, so given to nobility of thinking.

In that humble cottage there was a miniature Sparta, and children were getting trained there to be just as brave and true as any of the youths of that famous republic. There was, in addition to all this, a spirit of comfortable contentment brooding over the place; of healthy cheerfulness at life and its outlooks, that, unconsciously to herself, enfolded her like a soft garment, bring-

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ing warmth and comfort. They had mingled little with Longhurst people; their station was so humble the great folk there had passed them by with the same indifference they meted to commonplace specimens of the dumb creation, and possibly the Wardells had been the gainers in this matter, for worse even than an unworthy book is the society of the ignoble; if one possesses themselves the nobler elements of character, these will more healthfully develop in solitude than in mixed society; it is only weak natures that run to seed in silence.

When she reached home Angela found that Lindsay's anger had not finished yeasting; rather it had gained in strength as the girl prolonged her stay. She was sitting in the twilight, her knitting needles gleaming savagely in the fading light as she plied them with wasteful vigor.

"Where have you been till this time of night, Angela?" she demanded.

"At the Wardells', and O, Lindsay! I have had such a delightful afternoon. I wish you would go there and make them a visit, perhaps you might find out what makes it so charming for me."

She finished the sentence a little doubtfully. It was a question in her mind if Lindsay had

faculty enough of the right sort to make that discovery.

"Me visit at the house of a day laborer? No; I have a little more respect for myself than that, if some others I could mention haven't."

"Waan't it nice in the Lord Jesus that he went so much among working people? and, Lindsay, he was well born."

She spoke with a gentle reverence that for a moment silenced the housekeeper's wrath. Presently gathering up her forces, however, the latter went on:

"I've taken care of you since you was born, and I promised your father to do by you as if you was my own; no wonder I feel distressed when I see you taking to such ways. You should associate with none but the best in Longhurst."

"I believe I do that when I go to the Wardells'; I don't think you understand people very well, Lindsay — some don't, you know — or you would see how superior they are. Now I don't care much for the Longhurst folk; they are not my style at all, and you know they were not my papa's," concluding her remarks with a melancholy smile.

"What is this about Donald coming here to school that Miss Buckingham tells me about?"

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What do you think your papa would say to that?"

"If I could ask him I am sure he would say for me to fill up the schoolroom with boys and girls who want to learn about the world they live in."

"Bless me, child! what are you going to become? I am afraid you will break my heart."

"I won't do that now, for I gave myself away to God to-day. I am always going to belong to him after this. Aren't you glad, Lindsay?"

There was a pathetic quaver in the girlish voice, it was so hard to have no one to sympathise with her in this great, new joy, so sad to be met on every side with indifference.

"If it makes you any more inclined to associate with them beneath you I won't see much cause for thankfulness. Dear me, I don't know what I'll do with you at eighteen if you are so willful at twelve."

"Good-night, Lindsay! I am going to bed now, and I am grateful to you for not scolding me any more about Donald." She was gone before Lindsay had time to reply, and that practical woman was left even more discomfited than usual when she and Angela had a dispute about the Wardells.

"It is no use, I shall be compelled to do it, much as I dislike tea parties. Things has come to that pass something must be done, and the only way I see is to get Angela interested in others beside the Wardells, and in fine clothes — they'll be a sight of help; as it is, the child is getting too much for me." Thus Lindsay soliloquized as she lighted the lamp and got the weekly newspaper — her usual solace in worry of any kind.

The following week she put her resolve into execution, issuing, in Angela's name, the invitations for a select gathering of young people, very much, however, against that young lady's wishes, for the people invited were every one of them several years older than herself, and for the most part comparative strangers. They came the evening appointed and a merry, romping crowd they were, according to Lindsay's estimate; very different from the specimens of young ladyhood it had been her privilege to wait upon in her young days, so she assured Angela and her teacher, at breakfast the following morning.

Angela pleaded hard to have a party of her own choosing to finish the remains of the feast, but Lindsay had suffered enough from society for the present, and the only concession she would

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make was for a picnic in the pine woods. Angela soon decided this was the best plan, after all, for they would have all outdoor at their disposal, and no one to interfere with any of their enterprises, while they could eat their good things, seated on logs and mossy hillocks, with as little ceremony as the robins themselves. This she felt would be a special relief to some of her guests whose parents had neglected to teach them table etiquette.

She issued her invitations with great glee. Some thirty children in all were bidden to her feast, among them three little Browns, sisters of Martha, their own housemaid, who took all the more interest on that account in the gathering, no doubt feeling her heart grow more tender toward the child who delighted in making glad the poor as well as rich. Even Lindsay got interested in it before the day arrived, and gave orders for a fresh batch of cake to be made, and boiled a ham in order that the supply of sandwiches might not be limited.

Of course lessons were out of the question while the picnic was on the carpet, and if it had not been for Donald, who scarcely expended a moment's time in anything but steady work at his lessons, their teacher would have been in despair over her wasted time.

Lindsay found the attraction across the field too strong for her when the day came and the children were at their games under the trees, and presently Martha, who was busy carrying the good things out to the table which Wardell had set up under the trees, was surprised to see her skirting along the edge of the wood, and watching the children flitting among the trees. Angela found it one of the happiest seasons of her life when at last the tea was ready, and each child was seated around her waiting to begin the important work of the day.

Sammy Smith assured Eldora Black who was sitting beside him that Angela reminded him of a piece of sunshine walking around. The boy had a poetic streak in his composition, inherited, so his mother affirmed, from herself. As he sat there, a sandwich in one hand and a mug of hot coffee in the other, he felt like bursting into rhyme to immortalize the occasion, but the sight of Martha bearing down on him with a huge basin of ice-cream dissipated the poetic frenzy, and he fell to the work in hand as greedily as the most lumpish youth in the crowd. Ice-cream was of too dissolving a nature on a hot summer evening to wait for anything so tedious as verse making, Sammy wisely decided. Eldora enjoyed

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having Sammy's attention directed to the victuals better than on Angela, for they had been keeping company according to her version of the matter for quite a good while—although both of them were only just into their teens.

Lindsay had been gradually circling nearer, and before the tea was concluded was working away among them as busy and interested as Angela herself. It certainly was an inspiring sight the way the good things disappeared down those thirty youthful throats. Angela, in the fervor of her hospitality, pressed them to eat and drink until nature rebelled at last, and they could only gaze regretfully at the plates filled with good things still untouched. Lindsay sent them home shortly after they ceased eating.

"They'll be getting sick next thing, and I don't want them dying around here," she said heartlessly, but she had forgotten what long-suffering organs children's stomachs are, and the nutritious, well-cooked food was not likely to give them any trouble save a trifling feeling of discomfort where they were hedged in with tight waistbands.

Angela watched the last one disappear from sight, and then turned her own face homewards with a rather lonely feeling.

"If I could only have a few of them stay here," she confided to Martha, "for some of them have such poor homes and food. If it weren't for Lindsay I would keep a few of them, for we have so much more than we need."

"But she looks well after your money, and when you are grown up they say you'll be a great heiress; and folks always make a time over them, you know."

"I hope I will be very rich when I'm a woman; one can do such quantities of things. Why, if I had a great deal of money I might have a picnic every week."

Martha smiled, but did not acquaint her with the fact that a great deal of money would not be required in order to do this.

"If I do grow to be a woman and can do just as I like I shall help people all the time. It was so delightful for the Lord Jesus that he could do that. I do not think he studied very much either—not after he was twelve years old. He seemed to do nothing but go about to do good to the sick and hungry. What large picnics he used to have."

"Certainly you should wish to be like Him, for he is our Saviour."

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did? A great many people say in meeting that they want to be like Him, but I don't think they try very hard. I am very much surprised at church members. I have heard them on Sunday evenings in the church in Longhurst talking so lovely about bearing their cross and following their Master, and I used to think the people there were most like the angels, but I asked Mrs. English who comes to help at the Pines, you know, when there is extra cleaning to be done, if they helped her and other poor women much, and visited them when they were sick, and she said: 'Lawa! no, Miss; they don't sense such things; and then they haven't the time, they say. There's only one or two well-to-do women there who take much real notice of poor people.'"

"I could have told you more than that myself. Why, if you'd watch them when there is any doings in the place, the rich go together and the poor go by themselves. They have Sunday-school picnics, but my! they're such stuck-up affairs a body would as soon take their bite down cellar, only for the cheap ride in the cars to another place; one likes to get a view of all the new places they can; it's next thing to seeing the fashion; but if I was rich, and just a little bit above them, wouldn't I pay them back!"

"Do you think the Lord will take those people to Heaven when they die? They are not the least like him," Angela said. This was an entirely new and startling view of the case which had never before presented itself to her mind.

"Of course they will go to Heaven; whole churchfuls of people couldn't be sent anywhere else, you know," Martha said cheerfully.

"I am not sure about it; and isn't it a dreadful thing if they are mistaken about the way they are going? but the little children will all be sure to go to Heaven. I think that is the reason so many of them die off."

"That is a comfortable way to look at it, I am sure; but, bless me! just see the dishes I have to wash; I won't want to live with you when you are a woman if you have picnics every week."

"I will help you to wash them," Angela said plaintively. The excitement had sustained her through the unusual exertions of the day, but the sight of those dishes would be discouraging to the most industrious of girls, and Angela certainly was not, for she disliked dishwashing next to study. Lindsay came to the rescue, so that Angela's services were not needed, and soon kitchen and pantry were restored to their normal condition of perfect neatness.

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CHAPTER V.

FESTIVAL TIMES.

DONALD's progress under his new teacher was phenomenal. At first he was eager to study those subjects mainly that had to do with his favorite pursuit, but as his vision broadened he saw that for a perfect mastery of even one scientific pursuit elementary study of all kinds was necessary. With the self-control that was habitual to him he set himself resolutely to pursuing the regular course necessary to make him a well-equipped scholar, only giving himself up in moments of leisure to what was really the single passion of his life. Angela began to lose her interest in his pet study when she saw him so absorbed in Latin and Greek, and the natural sciences, for he had boldly plunged into everything his teacher was able or willing to teach him; soon her enthusiasm in her apt pupil was so keen Angela was in danger of being neglected.

The harvest fruits were stored, and the early snows began to flock the gray meadows, but Donald still continued his search for specimens. He found in those volumes borrowed from the library at the Pines so many varieties of insects and creeping things pictured which he had not yet discovered, that he was unwilling to give up the search until the frozen ground finally compelled him to desist. Some mornings he would come to school pinched with the cold, having been out searching for specimens since sunrise. His parents had all the Scottish reverence for the student and scholar, hence, when it had been finally decided that he was to be educated very few druses were demanded of him, and he was allowed to be pretty much his own master—a freedom there was little danger of his abusing.

The gain to Angela in having him in the school-room became more manifest when he came closer to her in those studies in which she had got the start of him by months and even years. She found it a very gracious task helping him in difficult places; to assume the rôle of teacher to one so clever and independent was particularly gratifying. As Christmas drew near the prospect of this state of affairs continuing grew very faint; it was with extreme satisfaction her teacher saw

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that Angela was becoming more eager for study; even Lindsay noticed the change, although she was too set in her opposition to having Donald there to acknowledge it. Lindsay was a born aristocrat in all her views, although she came of a line of peasant ancestors dating back to the earliest recollection of her great-grandmother, whom she had heard in childhood recounting the struggles of her grandparents to keep their little ones from suffering with cold and hunger. This must have been at least one hundred and fifty years before Lindsay's advent on the scene of earthly turmoil, but some trace of that ancient fight for life may still have influenced her, for her instincts were exceedingly thrifty; so much so that she could not part with a banknote without a struggle. But she was honest, and so far as her light went, conscientious and true as steel to a charge committed to her trust. It was because of these qualities that she had been so long retained in the comfortable nest she first dropped into when she crossed the seas.

At Christmas there was a round of parties given for the young folk in Longhurst, to several of which Angela was invited and very injudiciously on Lindsay's part, encouraged to attend. The latter was very anxious to have her charge

get rid of her foolish notions about duty, and giving herself and means so largely to help others; all very well by their way for preachers and their wives, or Sisters of Charity, but extremely out of place in a young creature budding into womanhood, whose income and ancestry were alike in advance of any other young maiden's in all that section of country. Although Lindsay had nothing special to boast of in her own forefathers, she had adopted all of Angela's, and took ten times the satisfaction out of them that the rightful heir of their excellencies did, making it occasionally very uncomfortable for the Longhurst ladies with whom it was her privilege occasionally to exchange civilities, by talking more than good taste required of birth and ancestry and such tantalizing topics, since they had not inherited anything special in that line. It could not be matter for surprise under the circumstances that Lindsay was not a favorite in Longhurst, but there was not a lady there who did not covet the privilege of paying an occasional visit to the Pines, since there was no other house like it within their reach, and for the more imaginative ones among them an afternoon spent in those rooms, so refined and elegant because of their belongings, was a treat not duplicated elsewhere.

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A large party gathered in those charming rooms was an experience the best of them coveted, and during this winter Lindsay permitted herself the luxury of several such festive seasons, of course given in Angela's name, but she was herself really the presiding genius and very graciously and with great dignity did she dispense the hospitality of the Pines. Angela did not dislike entertaining, for it gave her, so she fancied, the opportunity of helping people to have a good time, but the return of hospitalities, the labor of which devolved solely on her, since Lindsay never indulged herself in so much as a neighborly tea drinking, was very irksome. Angela confided to Donald, whenever she found him sufficiently alive to such trivialities her dislike of Longhurst merrymakings.

One day she was particularly disgusted with the whole thing, for she had been up late the night before, and beside had found the evening particularly dull spent among people all of them older than herself and none of them specially anxious to amuse a child like her, for whom, if Lindsay had not been so blinded by prejudice, the bed would have been the most suitable place. She went to Donald for sympathy, describing her oft-recurring trials in the matter, adding with amusing frankness:

"To think of forcing a child like me to endure those late hours and all the silly talk! You have no idea how silly everything is; really I would sooner be with your bugs, for if they were too tiresome I could throw them out of the house."

"You will get to like it after awhile; girls always do," he remarked indifferently.

"There is no one to be sorry if I should; no one but the Lord," she corrected.

"Yes, there is one would be sorry," he said, looking at her more intently than was usual with him to regard any object save some insect or bug.

"Would you be sorry?" she asked wistfully.

"I would; when I get my own house you are the only person I want to come near it. Of course my own folks must come, because we are the same family — but you will come as my friend. No friends can be nearer to each other than you and I shall always be, now and always."

"O, Donald! do you really like me better than any one outside of your own family?" she asked joyously.

"That wouldn't be saying much for the way I like you. I wonder who there is around here that I should care particularly for?"

Her face lost some of its brightness as she

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said, "Just for a second or two I thought perhaps you did care a great deal for me."

"Well, so I do — more than for any one else in the world," he said, almost angrily. Boylike, he did not care for these sentimental episodes that were very well for girls, but quite beneath the dignity of a boy.

"Why, Donald! you do not like me better than your own mother?" There was pain as well as reproof in the tones of her voice.

"One can't help their liking; I don't have to try to like you, it comes to me the same as breathing; but there, don't let us ever talk about these things as long as we live. I shall always feel the same way towards you, and it is just foolishness to be talking about it."

"You will let me send you to college, and by and by to Germany — you say you are bound to go there some time."

"Well, so I am, but a girl is not going to send me."

"If I was the girl, Donald, it would be all right, wouldn't it? It will be lovely to have you do the studying for both of us. After you learn all that Miss Buckingham can teach you I won't go to any more expense for my own education, and shall lay out all the money on you."

"I shall not respect you if you cease studying and grow up an ignorant woman, and liking don't amount to very much where there is no respect. I shall want my best friend to be able to talk with me on the subjects that I think most about. Women don't amount to much just to look at, no matter how beautiful they may be — there is something finer needed than white and pink flesh and pretty features. One's soul need never grow ugly and wrinkled like the body when it gets old."

"If I must be a scholar couldn't we go to college together?" she said rather hopelessly.

"I suppose so," was the uncompromising reply.

"And I can pay all the expenses?"

"No, indeed; I shall do that myself. It will take longer, but when I am a man I want to be a genuine one, and not have any person who has a claim on my brains or body."

"What do you mean?"

"If the grocer and butcher fed me for nothing I can't understand why they wouldn't own my bones and flesh, since their provisions built my body up; and it would be just the same with my knowledge if some one else paid the bills."

"You are going to make a very bright man, you go so far down into things; it tires me to follow you."

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Angela was discouraged at the tone the conversation had taken, and but for his assurance that she stood first in his affections she would have felt even worse; but she resolved by some means or other to be worthy of his regard, in that coming time when he was to be so wise in all his gathered stores of knowledge.

Angela's dislike of the Longhurst festivities in nowise lessened. To be forced to sit up late at night, and wear uncomfortably tight clothes, did not afford her half so much comfort as visiting at the Wardells' in her every-day dress, talking with David about the dead and gone heroes that he loved so well, and who while he talked about them, ceased to be the dusty time-cured individuals she studied about in history, but live men whom she could admire or despise as really as the people she saw every day. He cast the spell of life about them, and as he talked over the heroic or contemptible deeds they had done she would feel her blood tingle with enthusiasm, and forgetting her dislike of labor, would resolve to perform heroic deeds herself some day.

With regret she thought of Lindsay's contempt of the Wardells, and did not know that she had no rule, save that of sight, by which to take people's measure, hence fine houses and

equipages dazzled her, and since the Wardells were entirely deficient in these it was quite beyond her powers to estimate them justly. But the epidemic of tea parties exhausted itself after a time, and Angela was freed from the unwelcome and unnecessary discipline.

Her mind about this time was subject to very frequent changes. At times she would resolve to be a genuine student, and then she would fall into a less heroic mood and conclude that she could live very respectably on a small stock of knowledge since she had more than the average share of worldly substance. But as she watched Donald as the months wore around she grew ashamed of herself. His appetite for knowledge seemed, if anything, to increase, and seeing him work with such intensity of purpose was like an appealing conscience. When she was inclined, as was too frequently the case, to indulge in her favorite occupation of building air castles, a glance across the room at his table strewn with books, and the clear-cut, determined face bending above them, would bring her suddenly down to the actualities of the present. Altogether, it was a great relief to her when the midsummer holidays arrived. It was such a comfort to know that neither her teacher nor any one, save Donald, expected her

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to look inside of a lesson book. She suggested to him the last day of school, that they put away their books together—an act of thoughtfulness that he did not appreciate.

“Do you think I am going to lose over two months?” he asked with a good deal of impatience.

“Why, certainly not; there won’t be any part of the year that I shall live more really than that time. I shall take it to get better acquainted with people and the outdoor world,” Angela said stoutly. “One needs to know about such things more than books.”

“I know as much about people as I want to without taking two solid months to study them up. You can find out all about them easier than what I want to know more about. If you know one person well that is about all you need to study in that species; but see how many varieties of insects and bugs there are.”

“When you get into psychology and anatomy and all those studies about our bodies you will find beetles and butterflies are nowhere in comparison with men. Indeed we are a long way ahead of them.”

“I have made up my mind to find out about a great many things that puzzle me before Miss

Buckingham comes back. I often wish I had been born five thousand years ago; been one of Adam's grandsons. They had such a long time to study. It discourages me when I think how much there is to be found out and what a little while we have to do it in."

"I never feel that way; for my part I am very content not to know about everything; the people who are all the time studying are a dry lot, I think; they do not get so much good out of their life as the ones who take things easy; they are all the time so hurried for want of time, they never can loiter along and let quiet, peaceful thoughts creep into their hearts."

"That is where your greatest mistake is. Why, as I sit here studying I could not have believed any one could be so happy. It seems sometimes as if great worlds of thought were opening out to me. Oh! it is grand to"—he stopped abruptly.

"To what?" Angela asked curiously.

"To know that you have thoughts of your own, and that you can train them to take hold on the highest, and not sink in the mire."

"Well, I mean to get acquainted with this world, and to take all the good out of it that I am able, and then when I go to another world where things never come to an end, I will study

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better. One can never feel hurried in eternity; and then I have decided while I am here to help others; to get people to be good. You know one can't be everything and do everything when time is so short, and it isn't as if there was no eternity coming."

"And won't you try to be a scholar?" Plainly he strongly desired her to accompany him along those upward paths.

"O, yes! just a comfortable sort of one. I shall know a little about a great many things, but I do not think you should ask me to be a great scholar. God does not create every one alike, and I am not thirsty for knowledge, like you. There are butterflies as well as bees, and God made them both. It would be silly for the butterfly to try to make honey and wax. Why, it couldn't possibly do it, and neither can I write Shakespeare's Sonnets or another Paradise Lost. I am just myself and I am not going to snap the strings of my mind trying to be what I am not."

"You might do a great deal if you would only try."

"Why, Donald, I have been trying ever since you came, and I mean to study some more yet."

She spoke very encouragingly, but Donald looked far from satisfied, as he said: "You have

hardly begun and yet you speak as if you were nearly done studying; but I won't coax you any more, only you cannot be my real friend if you are ignorant. You can only come up to me for a certain distance — the rest I should be alone."

He left the room abruptly, giving her no time to reason further, neither would he permit himself to be drawn into a similar argument. Angela was provoked with herself for feeling so disturbed at Donald's words, and tried to assure herself that it need not make very much difference if he did not classify her friendship very highly, since there would be plenty of people left, but she could not succeed in her efforts, and the result was that she regretfully brought her books out and shutting herself up for a couple of hours every morning she set herself resolutely to studying. After awhile she grew to enjoy those hours of work, idle enjoyment began to grow monotonous and unfortunately for her there were not sick and poor people enough in her neighborhood to take much of her time, since poor people had other duties to do beside being entertained by benevolent damsels; and the very few invalids in their vicinity preferred to be left alone for part of the time. She felt it a grievance at times that there was so little misery for her to relieve, so few

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sorrowful hearts for her to comfort with a gift of flowers or some of Lindsay's excellent preserves, and she quite envied those people in story books who had such quantities of work ready provided for them.

One day when Donald came up for a book she detained him long enough to ask if he did not think it a great pity that she did not have the chance to do good like people in books. He seemed to be studying the pattern of the carpet very critically, but he was actually battling with himself to keep from laughing outright. It struck him as exceedingly comical to hear this bright young creature mourning over the fact that she could not throw herself into the vortex of misery in some great city's slums—she who had never seen a worse case of misery than a sick neighbor, who might certainly be somewhat affected by poverty, but who nevertheless knew little of actual need. He raised his eyes at last and looked at her closely for a few seconds, and then said:

"I made up my mind the last time we were talking never to say anything more to you about studying; this can't be said to be on that subject exactly, but I will say that it seems to me that the work the Lord mostly wants you to do just

now is to get yourself ready against the time that work actually comes to you. I am not much of a judge of such things, only as far as I have read, but I have an idea that people do not begin to do much towards evangelizing the world either at your age or mine. A few centuries ago the little children in Europe started on a Crusade to rescue the Saviour's tomb from barbarians, but the only Jerusalem they reached was the Heavenly one. No doubt the Lord received them very kindly as the tired, starving creatures went thronging heavenwards, but I think if he had been on the earth he would have advised them to let the barbarians keep his empty tomb, and for them to stay at home with their parents until they were old enough really to begin work."

"How beautifully you can talk for one so young; I most think you ought to be a preacher." Angela thought it was as well to turn the conversation; the look of disgust on Donald's face at her remark made her desire, however, to mollify him directly, but he took his book and left immediately.

Occasionally he used to permit Angela and his own sisters to accompany him on exploring expeditions. Angela used to enjoy those occasions more than any of them, probably. They used to

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be gone for hours. He was a merciless leader, never seeming to feel fatigue himself, and not over-patient with others if they complained. No matter how tired she might be, Angela used to trudge bravely at his side, feeling richly repaid for her weary marches by the friendly comradeship Donald invariably showed on such occasions. She always went provided with a basketful of luncheon, of which she and the two little girls used to partake with the relish begotten of the exercise and fragrant smell of the woods; but Donald would never share her good things. He used to have a supply of oat cake stowed away in his pockets, and was not at all particular when some of his specimens by mistake got into the same pocket with his lunch. He used to know pretty well when Angela was about as tired as she ought to be, when he would sit down on some mossy knoll or recumbent tree-trunk, and chat for a half-hour or so. Those were the most delightful moments of all, and Angela would toil on wearily for hours, for the brief recompense of talking with Donald about the wonders of the world in which they lived.

On such occasions she was mostly a listener, not being able to add more than a monosyllabic reply to his remarks. She used to wish that it

was not so hard to be bright and to learn about all these mysteries, or to think the noble, uplifting thoughts that Donald indulged in, making him so indifferent to the fact that his father was poor and their lot lowly. She used to fall to dreaming sometimes after the conversation was ended, and they were trudging sturdily along over ferns and leaves, and all the wonderland of the unbroken forest about them, how probably the boy Homer or young Socrates were much like him once, in the days when they wandered over the hillsides of Greece, their minds filled with just such high thoughts as to-day throbbed and pulsed in his heart.

She forgot his coarse garments and the abbreviated limb that forced him to limp rather ungracefully, seeing in him only the scholar and hero that he was yet to be. She used to wonder if he would still care for her in that day when he took his place among the leaders of thought—would still remember her; but might it not be with a sort of pitying contempt? She used to make some very resolute promises to herself, but they were easier made than fulfilled.

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CHAPTER VI.

MRS. WILBUR MOXTON'S PLANS.

WHEN Miss Buckingham returned, she was agreeably surprised to find that her pupils had continued, to some extent, their studies during the holidays. Angela confessed frankly that the work had been irksome.

"I found it very tiresome at first," she said, "but after awhile those two hours I spent over my books were the best of the day, but it was only after they were ended that I used to think so; to the very last I disliked going off by myself and studying. It seems a pity that we always dread a duty, especially when we find out that the doing of it makes us happy."

"It seems to be the way with us all to enjoy doing our own pleasure, rather than what is our duty, but it is possible to overcome the weakness; and every time you do so conquer self, you leave yourself stronger to gain future victories."

"But it is very tiresome; I hope we won't need such discipline in the next world," Angela replied.

"There are a great many mysteries to be solved in that other world, but our chief duty is to do our part well in this world, and the next will be all right with us."

It required a good deal of urging, however, to keep Angela in the mood for study, and at the best, the acquiring of knowledge was uphill work with her.

They began the second year of school under very comfortable circumstances. Donald was anxious to take the preparatory studies for matriculation at college. The question as to how he was to secure the necessary funds for this was a mystery to the family at the Pines, but they were not aware of the sturdy material of which the lad and his parents were made. For years Wardell had indulged the dream that some day one of his boys would be called from the plough to fit himself for the work of the ministry, and for this time, when it should arrive, he and his wife, out of their meager income, had laid by a small sum each year. Donald knew nothing of this, and was not expecting much help from his parents — only so far as they would provide for

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him were he still with them. Long ago he had heard his father describe the hardy training of the sage of Chelsea, who studied at college to such good effect on the box of oaten cakes the carrier brought to him each week from his mother. If his splendid brain tissues were built up on such simple fare, he could trust himself on the same heroic diet. Setting his mind at rest, therefore, about what was before him, he studied on quite indifferent to the hard discipline such a course would subject him to in any university town in our newer world. Scottish lads were better accustomed to such ways than American, but Donald neither thought nor cared for this.

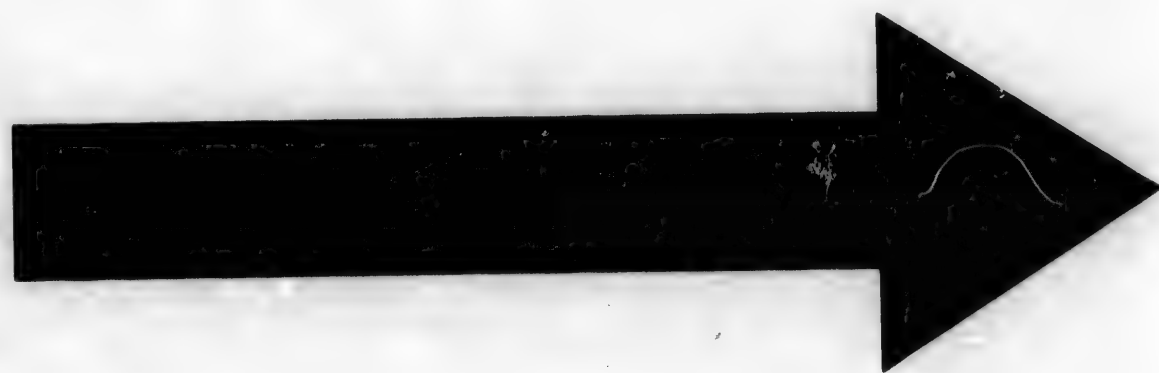
One day Angela said to him, "If your father feeds and clothes you, who will do the rest?"

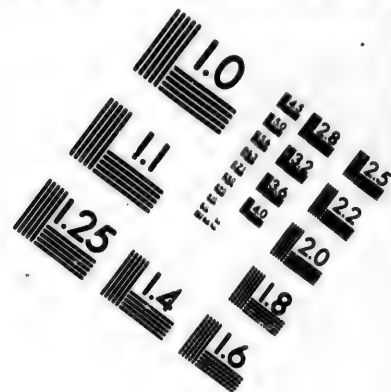
"I can saw wood and do plenty of things," was the sturdy reply.

"But they do not burn wood nowadays the same as they did when Horace Greeley went to college. You surely would not scour knives and black the boots, Donald?"

"I certainly would, and be very much obliged for the chance if they would pay me for it."

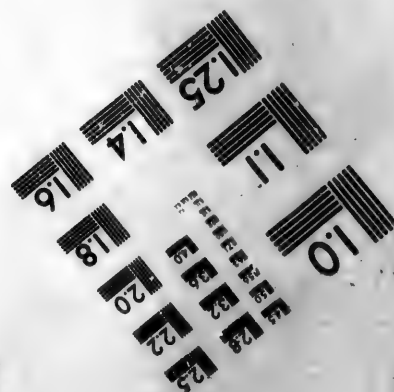
"I do not think that would be quite respectable work. Would you feel hurt if I should be just a little ashamed of you for doing such work?"





A resolution test chart featuring several groups of horizontal and vertical lines of varying thicknesses. Each group is accompanied by a numerical value indicating the resolution level. The values include 1.0, 1.1, 1.25, 1.4, 1.6, 1.8, 2.0, 2.2, 2.5, 2.8, 3.2, 3.6, 4.0, 4.5, 5.0, 5.6, 6.3, 7.1, 8.0, 9.0, and 10.0. The chart is used to measure the resolving power of imaging systems.

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"I should indeed." He spoke sternly; then after a constrained pause, he added, "As if blacking boots isn't just as respectable as making them, or work of any kind."

"There would be very little money in it, and besides, it is very untidy work; I do not think you know much about it."

Donald looked dubiously at his boots, and acknowledged that was the case.

"O, Donald! if you only would borrow the money from me."

"I might die before I got my debt paid, and then you would, in reality, own what knowledge I had got to all eternity."

"I would not ask for better pay than that, for I do not expect to own much if I have to get it myself."

Angela spoke eagerly.

"Please never speak of such a thing again, for it is no use."

"I shall send you lots of preserves and potted meats to eat with your oat cake," she said decidedly.

"And I shall eat them with a relish, because they will make you seem near, for when I am away I shall miss you most of all."

"You won't need to go for a long time yet;

Miss Buckingham says not for another year after this, and then you will be able to take the Sophomore year."

His face lighted up as he said, "That is grand news."

Angela stood still to look at him, for he, too, had suddenly stopped on the way and was looking dreamily through the interlacing leaves into the dense forest beyond, as if he saw something particularly beautiful there.

"We need not begin to worry about being separated for a long time yet," she said cheerfully, "and maybe if I am very lonely I may go with you; we might keep house with Lindsay, and you could help me with my studies by way of paying me," she added hastily, seeing the illuminated look suddenly vanish from his face.

"I shall never pay my debts that way," he said quietly.

"Well, I scarcely think I shall go to college; sometimes I am afraid there is not room enough in my head for all the knowledge I am crowding in. You know some heads haven't much spare room," she added apologetically.

"You need not have any anxiety on that account; there is plenty of vacant room in your head yet."

Angela colored slightly, but did not attempt to contradict him, for, unfortunately, she had learned by past experience that she was sure to get worsted in an argument. Donald was always careful not to begin to reason about anything, but if he was drawn into it, he was certain to be sure of his side, and to that he would stick, no matter who his opponent might be. He sturdily maintained that boys had just the same rights in this respect as men.

The manner of conducting their affairs at the Pines provoked little comment, usually, in Longhurst; but when it became known, after the lapse of a good many months, that Angela had admitted her gardener's son to equal privileges in the schoolroom, some of the busybodies (for of these social excrescences Longhurst had an abundant supply) undertook to regulate matters. Mrs. Wilbur Moxton was the first to interfere, and with her it was more a personal than benevolent undertaking, since she had a son and daughter of her own, at a suitable age to be benefited by a teacher of such acknowledged ability as Miss Buckingham. She made up her mind decidedly that young Wardell should be relegated to his proper sphere, and her own children put in his place. She went early, lest some other designing

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mother should forestall her, but it was not merely to secure the superior educational advantages for her children that she planned, other and more extended possibilities loomed up in the future.

Only a short time now would elapse until Angela would be old enough to think of lovers and marriage, and when that period arrived, Mrs. Moxton concluded that no better arrangement could be made than to have her son secure Angela and her belongings. To further this desirable consummation, it would be wise, she decided, to have them thrown together in the close intimacy of the schoolroom. Certainly her son Lewis would appear to excellent advantage when compared with young Wardell.

As she walked out to the Pines one afternoon, with this laudable end in view, her practical gaze took in very little of the natural beauty of the scene, but certainly did not fail to notice very critically the special features of the fine property with which, at no distant day, Angela would probably endow some fortunate youth. With the decision of character for which she was noted, Mrs. Wilbur Moxton made up her mind that her son should be that fortunate individual. It would be very gratifying in the coming years, to acquaint Lindsay with the fact that the youthful Moxtons,

who by that time might be expected on the scene, had inherited the rich, aristocratic blood of the Marlowes.

She was in an unusually uplifted frame of mind by the time she reached the vine-covered door, and stood waiting for her knock to be responded to. A shadow lengthening across the pathway at the side of the house drew her attention in time to see Donald Wardell pass leisurely homewards, an open book in his hand, in which he was so intently absorbed he did not see the visitor who was busily plotting against him.

Angela admitted the unexpected visitor, the latter quite overwhelming the girl with the warmth of her greetings. They sat chatting for some time when the visitor announced her intention of remaining for tea, an announcement that reminded Angela of her own lack of hospitality. Lindsay was summoned, but first she made arrangements for a most excellent repast, and then hastened to welcome her guest, for she had a particular liking for company, and tea drinkings in particular. Mrs. Wilbur withheld her communications until they were seated around the tea-table, and Lindsay's jellies and cold meats were being satisfactorily discussed, when she delicately broached the subject which, now that the moment

had come, was a more formidable task than she had anticipated.

She began operations by a dolorous description of their school privileges at Longhurst, especially the deleterious effect of the promiscuous blending of high and low.

"One cannot be surprised if their boys and girls pick up uncouth gestures and slang from the children of day laborers. You do not know how rich your privileges are, Angela, studying here without any coarse associates."

"I have company in the schoolroom. I have not studied alone for a year," Angela said politely.

"Is it possible any of our young folks from Longhurst have been coming here?" the lady asked, with well-disguised surprise.

"O, no, indeed! some one much brighter than any one I know there," Angela said, with more honesty than politeness.

"May I inquire who this superior youth may be?"

"Donald Wardell."

"Wardell! strange I have never met them in society. Are they strangers in this part of the country?"

"Why, no, indeed! Did you never hear of

our David Wardell? He has been at the Pines for how long, Lindsay?"

"More than five-and-twenty years."

"Surely the lad you admit to such privileges is not your servant-man's son?" she cried, with well-affected horror.

"It surely is. Angela believes he's the makings of something uncommon; she'd be glad to educate him right through college, only he's too manly to let her."

"And is it possible you permit such intimacy between her and one so far beneath her?" She looked across the table severely at Lindsay, glad to have the opportunity of paying off some old debts, for Lindsay never seemed capable of forgetting that Mrs. Wilbur's origin had been particularly obscure, even for Longhurst; but Lindsay was equal to the occasion, for to Angela's astonishment she undertook Donald's defense sturdily.

"The lad's as well behaved and civil as if he'd been your own brother, ma'am; and if my young lady chooses to give him a lift with his learning, when it don't cost her a penny to do so, I can't see whose business it is; besides, David Wardell is a decent man, and as honest as the sun."

Lindsay looked very sternly through her gold-

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rimmed spectacles, while poor Mrs. Wilbur looked as if she would have enjoyed giving them a vigorous shaking all around, but she wisely restrained her indignation; if ever her son Lewis got to be master there they would find a new state of things, but until then she must bide her time.

"I must say it's a great privilege for the poor cripple. Is he trying to fit himself for a school-master—even that will be a great rise for one of Wardell's family."

"I can't see why the Wardells are not as good as other folks. Most of us in Longhurst come from the same stock he does—good working people." Lindsay's eyes snapped dangerously, while Mrs. Wilbur for the second time was compelled to swallow her wrath as best she could. She waited a moment to get control of her voice, and Angela, who was indignant at such rudeness to a guest, was opening her mouth to divert the conversation into other channels when Mrs. Moxton began again:

"I wish I could get my Lewis and Helen into your school." She turned to Angela, determined after this to ignore Lindsay.

"That would never do; for if we began letting folks send their children here we'd have a house full in no time." Lindsay spoke authoritatively.

"But, Lindsay, if Mrs. Moxton only sends two they won't fill the house," Angela remonstrated. Not that she was particularly anxious to have the youthful Moxtons at school, indeed she would have preferred extending the privilege to some others, if granted at all, but Lindsay had been so outspoken she was anxious to make some reparation.

"You can do just as you like in the matter," Lindsay said severely. "We forget that Miss Buckingham is the one who should first have been consulted."

Angela turned to her teacher with a faint hope that she would be of the same mind as Lindsay, but Miss Buckingham gave her consent at once, and so it was decided that the two new pupils were to come the following Monday, and having gained her point Mrs. Moxton left directly.

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CHAPTER VII.

A PASSAGE AT ARMS.

THE Moxtons came promptly on Monday morning. His mother's parting charge was: "Remember that you are a Moxton, and, if you can help it, do not take any notice of that Wardell. Let Angela Marlowe see how you despise such vulgar associates."

Lewis paid attention to his mother's remarks and resolved to put them in practice. Hitherto he had been a very indifferent student; he exerted himself more about the correct arrangement of his hair than the interior furnishing of his head, and was more interested in seeing that the color of his necktie harmonized with his eyes, than to get his character in harmony with pure and ennobling things. His mother's spiritual vision was limited, hence she was so well satisfied with her son she believed it was only necessary for such a superior youth to be associated with young

Wardell, for Angela to be impressed deeply with his excellence.

When he entered the schoolroom that morning and saw that a chair and table had been placed for him next young Wardell's his face mirrored the disgust he felt at such companionship, and without consulting the teacher he moved to another part of the room. The light was poor, and he found himself so near the stove he soon got uncomfortably warm, but he maintained his dignity and sat still. He resolved on the following morning to be on hand early enough to secure the coveted seat which, at the expense of his morning's nap, he accomplished, but only to be summarily ordered out of it by Angela when she came into the room.

"Donald has the first right to everything here, and you can only come by taking second best things," she said firmly.

"Then I won't come at all—to have that pauper put over me."

"He a pauper! why, he will be worth a score of you when you are men." Angela spoke hotly, but as quickly remembering herself said: "I am sorry I spoke so rudely. I know it is not what a Christian should do. Won't you forgive me?" There were tears in the eyes looking into his.

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"See here, I will if you let me keep this seat."

"I shall not do that, even if you do not forgive me."

"Very well; I will take the other seat, but mind, I'll not forgive either you or that Wardell sneak either. I will pay him up for this, see if I don't."

"What will you do?" she asked anxiously.

"I'll give him a thrashing he won't forget in a hurry."

"Maybe he will thrash you." There was a gleam in her eyes that said unmistakably, "I hope he will."

"I can manage that cripple; I'll eat my boots if I can't."

She looked down at the neat patent leather shoes. "You will boil them first, won't you?" she asked rather skeptically.

"I won't be in danger of having to eat them," he said loftily.

"If he should be the stronger you had better break your promise about eating them."

"I never break a promise," he said with the same lofty air, his last assurance raising him considerably in her estimation, for even Donald occasionally forgot to keep an appointment. Could it be possible this highly perfumed youth with

his hair parted like a girl's could be more manly than Donald?

She thought over their respective merits that morning more than was really good for her lessons, and began to wonder if boykind generally was a better class of beings than she had fancied, Donald himself striking her as so superior because of her ignorance of them as a class. One defect, however, in Lewis was patent to them all, his capacity for learning being even poorer than her own. He was at least two years behind Donald in his studies, but, as she compared the two lads, she concluded it was only natural Donald's brains should be in a better state of cultivation since he spent apparently so much less time on the visible portion of his being. She decided that the question as to which was the wiser way, must be deferred until they became men, when the mystery would be solved by their comparative successes.

Helen Moxton came alone to school the following morning and brought, in Lewis' stead, an indignant letter from his mother, demanding expulsion from the school of Donald Wardell. When Helen was asked for explanations she gave a thrilling account of her brother's disfigured appearance.

"Both of his eyes are black, and his mouth is swollen out of all shape. Mother has been poulticing him ever since he came home last night after dark."

"What kept him so late?" Miss Buckingham inquired.

"Why, he was ashamed to be seen on the street with such a face."

Donald sat looking quietly at Helen while she told her story, and not responding by so much as the contortion of a single muscle, to the angry glances she bestowed on him. Miss Buckingham told Helen to take her seat and then she turned to Donald for his version of the story.

"Is it necessary to trouble womenkind with boys' quarrels?" he asked with heightened color.

"It is in this case, Donald; Mrs. Moxton thinks you should be excluded from school; we certainly do not wish to do this if we can help it."

"I did not think I was striking him so hard, but his flesh is as soft as a baby's." Donald hesitated. "Won't you believe me if I tell you it was not my fault?"

He spoke bitterly, since she did not seem to believe his simple word without unnecessary explanation.

"I am sure you were not to blame, but for

Mrs. Moxton's sake we must hear the true version of the story."

"You must tell her, then, that I have the mark of Lewis' blow, but it is not on my face; he came behind me with a stick."

"Did you do anything to provoke his anger?"

"I had never spoken to him; you know as well as I what his reasons were." He turned to his open book not very politely, but there was a dignity about the act that charmed his teacher.

"Please let me tell what I know," Angela urged.

"Certainly; we shall be glad if you can throw any light on this mysterious circumstance."

Angela repeated her conversation with Lewis the previous morning, and his threats against Donald. The latter did not lift his eyes or appear to notice what she was saying, but her gentle defense of his rights sank all the deeper into his heart, while he resolved to be worthy of a friendship so unselfish, and to hold her best among his fellows, no matter if she never studied another hour. It came to him at that moment like a revelation, that there are qualities of the heart which take higher ranges than even intellect and culture.

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not be Donald Wardell, you will please tell your mother."

Miss Buckingham spoke sternly and then bade them go on with their lessons.

For several days Helen continued to come alone. No inquiries were made after the health of the sufferer, but one morning the young gentleman came bravely into school — the scars nearly healed on his face, while he looked as self-possessed as if he had been laid up in honorable warfare. To say that they were surprised to see him back again but mildly expressed their consternation when he came in and calmly took his seat, but Miss Buckingham was too rigid a disciplinarian to allow such a dastardly act in a pupil to pass unchallenged.

"We did not expect to see you here again." There was a touch of contempt in her voice.

"Oh! I wasn't hurt much. It couldn't be called a thrashing that he gave me."

He cast a meaning glance first at his shoes and then at Angela.

"Your punishment was not in proportion to your deserts, and therefore I shall supplement it. You can only remain here on condition that you ask Donald's pardon for your cowardly attack on him."

His face turned first pale and then a deep crimson, but he did not move nor speak.

"You can either write an apology, or else go directly and ask Donald to forgive you, promising that you will never do such a thing again."

There was no mistaking her determination to be obeyed. He took a sheet of paper and scrawled a few unintelligible lines on it and laid it on Donald's table, where it remained unnoticed until the school was dismissed, when Angela secured the precious missive, but could not make out a single word. Donald was not molested again, probably not so much because of the written promise Lewis had made, as for his respect for his schoolmate's well developed muscles. He found to his sorrow that if Donald limped when he walked, there was nothing defective about his hands, while he was considerably mystified that a lad of his years should have such excellent fighting ability, and make such small use of it, for Angela had told him in confidence afterward that their encounter was the first fighting he had ever done.

"He says that could hardly be called fighting," she hastened to explain, "for you weren't any good at all, you doubled right up and began to scream like a baby."

"I guess he'd have screamed too."

"But he never said a word when you struck him across the shoulders with a club. I had no idea boys were made of such different material. I thought at first that you might be nearly as good as Donald, but what a difference there is. One can hardly realize that you are the same race of beings." Angela talked on as innocently as if Lewis, and his lack of courage, and fine qualities generally, were some indifferent third party they were discussing.

"There is not another girl in Longhurst would be such a fool as to prefer that Wardell before me." Lewis was exasperated almost beyond all control.

"The Longhurst girls must be more than silly, then; but perhaps you only think so," she said cheerfully.

"No, I don't; why, they do not even know there is such a fellow; they do not take notice of low country people."

"They will be proud to have him notice them some day. Don't you know anything about great people?"

"I guess I do. There is not one of them in Longhurst but is on visiting terms at our house," he said proudly.

"Great people, indeed! Why, you are as ignorant as one of the Doolan children on the back lane," Angela said, with unusual sarcasm. "There never was a great person in Longhurst. I meant poets and philosophers and that sort. Why, about three out of every four really great men were country boys like Donald. They do not come from narrow-minded towns like Longhurst, or big cities where they have no chance to learn about things, but from the great, wide country where their hearts have plenty of room to grow in."

"Who told you so?" he asked skeptically.

"Books. You may learn a great deal out here that you would never have known. May be you will grow to be like Donald." She beamed upon him encouragingly. "Wouldn't it be lovely, now, if you took a turn for the better, and copied after him? Why, I should feel as if I had done a great deal of good. Of course you could never be really like him, but you can not help that; for you were not created very much at the first; and it is impossible to be great when the material for it is not in us."

"I'll let you see I have as much in me as he has, when we are men. The idea of comparing that country lout to me." His indignation was

overmastering him. "Why, he never wore a decent suit of clothes in his life; wouldn't know how to get into them if they were given to him."

"I was not comparing him to you. He is superior to any one I know personally, or at least he is going to be when he is a man."

"You are nothing but a foolish child or you wouldn't listen to his boastings. It's easy enough to say what you are going to be; for my part, I mean to be rich; I shall build a splendid house, and have a store and lots of clerks."

"Donald never boasted that much to me in all his life. It is not what he says, but what he is, that makes me feel that he is going to be celebrated some day."

Lewis turned away in disgust, determined never to argue with Angela about Donald again, since he always got worsted.

CHAPTER VIII.

A SURPRISE.

ANOTHER year slipped quickly away, Lewis and Donald coming no nearer to being friends than at the first. Lewis felt himself on a social plane so far above his schoolmate there was really no need for him to be jealous when the latter left him so far behind in his studies that even Angela grew cheerful when she compared her progress with what Lewis was making. Lewis assured her, by way of apology, that he did not purpose making his fortune with the same brains that he studied with, and he had conscientious scruples against overtaxing his strength with unnecessary study.

"But they say one must know a good deal if they expect to succeed and be respected," she suggested.

"Well, you see we have only one life to live, and if we study like Wardell, why, we have no

sort of good times at all. I like to go out in the evenings to parties and concerts and such places; they are enough sight pleasanter than be stewing over books all the time. That poor beggar hasn't anything better than study, but if he had my privileges he wouldn't get on as he does with his lessons."

Angela looked as if still unconvinced. The conversation took place just at the close of school before the midsummer holidays, and although she liked the enjoyments of the hour as well as Lewis, she was not much inspired by his words.

"The time is gone now, and you have very little to show for the way you have used it. Donald would get over as much ground in ten weeks as you have in forty."

"See what a booby he is. Put him in a room full of society people, and he would be like a fish out of water; and if he had a mint of money he couldn't get himself up as well as some I know could do on a mere nothing."

"That will come to him by degrees; and, any way, it don't matter much how a man dresses. I like to see them look careless; they are not so much like dry goods clerks. It is well enough for them and girls to think of those things, but it is childish for men."

Lewis colored, but did not attempt a reply. He had not got into an argument with Angela about Donald for a good many months, and he was wishing now most heartily that he had continued that judicious silence.

"And only think," Angela went on, as if determined to make him more thoroughly ashamed of himself, "Donald will be ready for college so much sooner than you, and he had no chance worth mentioning until he came with us."

"I don't care how much he learns, he will always be old Wardell's son, your hired man, and he could never come here to visit you as an equal, with his father digging in your garden. And no matter how much he loved you he wouldn't have the impudence to tell you so."

"Indeed he would tell me. He has told me several times that he likes me; once he said better than any one in the world." She spoke very triumphantly.

"Is he going to marry you when you are grown up?" Lewis asked fiercely.

"Why, certainly not. We never thought about it. I mean to marry a man from far away when I am a woman; that is, if I get married at all. I haven't quite made up my mind yet."

Her assurance that she had not thought of becoming Donald's wife was comforting, for Lewis, like his mother, had made up his mind that he would be not only Angela's husband, but the owner of the Pines. He had overheard more than one conversation between grown men as to the probable value of that estate, if properly managed, especially since the town had, of late, started out in that direction. If the fields were broken up and sold into building lots, a snug fortune from that source alone would be the result. If this fine property could be secured, there would be no questioning the possibility of his having that elegant house in the town, with the store in addition, and plenty of clerks to superintend. But he was a judicious youth, and gave no hint of his plans to Angela, or any one else. He merely set himself steadily to the work of beginning his wooing in good season. He reckoned Donald's absence an important factor in the undertaking; with him out of the way, Angela would soon forget his superior ability as a student, and as that was the only advantage he possessed, Lewis consoled himself that she would not be much impressed by that, especially as she was not a brilliant student herself.

He did not by any means approve, however,

of the long tramps through woodland and by stream, that Donald and Angela took together, hunting for specimens, with no other company than his sisters, the latter usually some distance in the rear, as they found each other's society more to their mind than the obscure conversations which Donald carried on with only Angela for audience. He decided at last to get Donald into his own social set, and let Angela see how poorly her hero conducted himself among his superiors. At considerable expense of personal dignity and comfort, Lewis got up a picnic, and took the trouble to convey Donald's invitation himself.

The day came and all the invited guests, Angela among the rest, but Donald alone was conspicuous by his absence.

"Is Donald not coming?" he asked anxiously. It was Angela's first intimation that he was invited, and she said with surprise, "Why, was he invited?"

"Yes; I went for him myself. Did he not tell you?"

"He did not mention it, and I was speaking with him on my way here."

Lewis turned away abruptly. It was necessary to give vent to his feelings, and it would not do

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for Angela to hear the phrases used on such an occasion. The following day she found an opportunity to question Donald on the cause of his absence.

"What did I want there?" he asked contemptuously. "You wouldn't expect me to go there and sit around like a girl, with a crowd that don't speak when they meet me on the street! not that I care particularly whether they speak or not," he hastened to explain.

"But you would have got to know them if you had gone, and then they would speak to you."

"I don't want to be jerking my head to folks I don't care a farthing for; I might be thinking about something and not see them."

"Do you ever feel badly because the Longhurst people don't notice you?" she asked anxiously.

"Never," was the hearty response. "What good or harm would they be to me, any way? I'd sooner meet with a good specimen. People don't amount to much unless they are the kind you want."

"Am I the kind you want?"

"Well, yes; only you know very little. You can't help me any, but still I like to have you around."

"I am most surprised that you do; after you

have been to college I do not expect you will want me to go hunting specimens with you any more."

"I may not come home very soon; I won't if I can get something to do, so it is not wise to worry about what may happen, or the way we may feel when we are older."

"You surely won't forget all about me," she pleaded.

"To be sure I won't. I have a better memory than that, especially when you have done more for me than all the world put together."

"You forget your father and mother."

"Oh! no, indeed; but parents are expected to do for their children just the same as they do for themselves; they do not get the same credit doing for their children as strangers do, and they do not deserve it."

"Do you think it sounds just right to talk that way about your parents?" Angela said doubtfully.

"Perhaps not, so we won't talk any more on that subject."

Donald certainly had somewhat original, and not exceptionally exalted ideas respecting the filial relations of children to their parents; Angela concluded that absence and intercourse with a

cold-hearted world might teach him to value properly the love that he held so lightly, and which she knew his parents bestowed upon him. To his great surprise, the day before he left home his father confided to him the secret of their hoardings. As they walked along the dewy lanes in the early morning he said to Donald, "I do not know how you are expecting to live at college, while you are getting through the two or three years it may take you."

"I have made no plans as yet, but some way will be provided. Mother has promised to make me a box full of oat cakes; by the time they are done I shall have something hunted up," was the fearless answer.

"And would ye live on oaten cake and cold water?"

"It would be wholesome; you can't deny that."

"I'm richt glad ye'll hae no need to do that, laddie." Under strong emotion Wardell sometimes fell into the speech of his childhood.

"Why not?" Donald asked with surprise. "I am not going to let her send me," nodding toward the house where Angela, no doubt, still lay in her little bed fast asleep.

"We dinna ask ye; yer mither and I hae

been getting ready for this day since long afore ye waur born. Glad are we that a bairn has been sent asking for the store we have put by for him."

Donald saw that his father was unusually moved, but not comprehending the cause for his emotion, kept silent.

"Ye dinna ask my meaning, laddie, but I will tell ye. The money lies in the bank yonder, to pay yer way through college. If ye do honor to yer faither and mithers, and, more than that, to yer God, we'll be paid for doing without and faring poorly that ye may be trained."

Donald's face worked convulsively. Never before had he realized what parental love meant. Was he worthy of such sacrifices? could he ever repay them? They walked on some distance in unbroken silence, save what the birds made as they flew busily from place to place in search of their breakfast, the chirp of the cricket in the bare uplands, or the tinkling of the bell as the cows went slowly pastureward.

Donald listened with pained intentness to these, and the lower notes from tinier throats which blended with the other sounds like the different instruments in an orchestra, and while he heeded so closely all these well-known voices, the question

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presented itself, How could he prove that he was worthy of such love — such devotion that partook almost of the nature of the Infinite? Certainly he would study, since to do this came as naturally to him as speaking. If life was spared, he would pay back the debt, interest and principal, but these were not enough. He would devote his life — that part of it that books and study did not utterly dominate — to the work of making their declining years bright. He did not speak, not even to thank his father for the sacrifices they had been making for years, but speech was not required between them, for they were so much alike. Donald had inherited from his father that still, deep nature that does not look to speech to reveal itself. Instinctively he felt certain that his father would understand that he was grateful without telling him so.

"She was telling me yonder, that you were going to work for them there — black their boots and the like, to pay your way. We would be richt willing to let ye do it if there waur any need, but I am glad it is not needed. Than'ful am I this day that it was put into your heart to do this thing."

He lifted his eyes to the far blue heavens, his lips moving in silent prayer, or rather thanks-

giving, that God had honored his faith and given the son he had longed for, even if he was not so perfect physically as he could desire; but a better dispensation had come than that old Levitical one that insisted on visible perfection.

"And will ye be a minister some day, Donald — preaching the wurd in the house of the Lord?"

"Not that, father; I have not the call for such work; it is not men's souls that attract me, but God's other mysteries. He made the small as well as the great. You must not be disappointed, for I did not plan my own destiny."

"Nay, lad, I will try to be content; but you will pray to God every day to guide you" — He paused, but Donald made no response.

"Won't ye promise me that much, my son?" There was an undertone of pain in the deep voice.

"Yes."

David Wardell was content with that brief response. He knew the promise would be faithfully kept.

They went back to the house for breakfast, Donald feeling, in some mysterious way, as if he had just taken upon him the vows of the Lord. He would in all honesty keep that promise. He shivered as he thought of what it might mean, to give up the work that lured him so powerfully,

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and instead spend his life amid the busy haunts of men, shut up perhaps in stifling cities, his heart starved through intercourse only with humanity; a type of creation that, with few exceptions, he cared nothing for. And then he comforted himself, or tried to, with the thought that God never intended such discipline for him as that. He never made such mistakes — creating a heart with a passion for one kind of work, and then forcing it to wear itself out on a kind that it loathed. He scarcely thought of anything else all day, although in all formality he had gone to his room under the eaves, and, fastening the door, offered his first genuine prayer — if genuine prayer means agony and thanksgiving; his had none of the latter.

There had never come to him that mysterious knowledge of sin — its burden and horror — which some experience when very young. His life had been so absorbed in other things, making him unusually free from self-consciousness, and restraining him from impurity of life and association — he lived so apart from others that he had slight knowledge of the ways of the young people about him. He had uttered morning and evening the prayers taught him in childhood, but they had grown into such a habit the repeating them.

occupied his thoughts little more than the act of breathing. The few words spoken so solemnly by his father that morning had touched his spiritual nature. He felt for the first time in his life that he did not belong entirely to himself; that One who had hitherto seemed scarce more than an abstraction, was a living power to whom he owed allegiance; whom, if he was wise, he must obey implicitly.

He found the question too profound to be solved in a few hours. He thought of the many passing on to the awful mysteries of eternity with no solution to the problem — would he be of the number?

In the blush of evening he went up through the meadow path to say good-by to Angela, his arms filled with books that he was carrying home. In one of them he had found a slip of paper, yellow with age, which described some rare specimens of insect life brought from South America, and preserved in the ebony cabinet in the library. He took it to Angela; perhaps they might still be there.

She had been waiting for him all day, and at that late hour was inclined to resent his inattention. He scarcely waited for her to conclude her chiding when he showed her the slip of writing.

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"Do you think they are in it still?" he asked.

"Oh! certainly; but must you see them to-night?"

"I would like very much to look at them."

"You have come so late, and there were other things I wanted to talk about than dead butterflies."

"You can talk of those other things while I look at the specimens. I daresay I have seen the same in pictures, but not really in their own natural beauty. Please, Angela, let me see them."

There was no resisting the entreaty in his voice. With a sigh of impatience she went to her father's desk, and in the secret drawer found the bunch of keys that hid so many other treasures than departed butterflies—if there is anything about a butterfly save its body and wings to vanish at death. She brought them into the room, and after many failures found the right key at last, but the lock had been so long unused it was rusty.

"Get some kerosene," Donald suggested. When Angela brought it a feather was abstracted from Lindsay's best duster, and after a few more efforts the lock responded to the key and delivered up

its treasures. Angela next got a lamp, and turning the light upon the open cabinet, she glanced in to see what might be there. Donald stood motionless and silent so long that she craned her neck at last to see his face, and the look of rapture in his eyes haunted her for many a day.

"You won't think much of these when you get to college, for they have great rooms full of specimens there."

He breathed a sigh of content, as if all his brightest longings were on the eve of being fulfilled, when Angela said merrily, "Why, you couldn't look gladder if we had found a pot of gold."

"What would a pot of gold be compared with them — each coin alike and about as ugly and flat as it could be? but these God made."

He paused, as if that last thought were a new and very wonderful one.

"I am sorry we did not know about them before. What tiresome marches it would have saved us."

"I should have hunted all the same, but not for such beauties as these; they come from a better country than ours. I mean to go where they live if I have to walk."

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light, and Donald as silently admired the poor dead things impaled on wires.

"I must go now," he said at last, with a gesture of regret.

"You find it harder parting with them than me, and they are only little dead things, that wouldn't know what you were if they had their life in them again." Angela turned away bitterly; surely Donald had no more heart than the bugs and beetles themselves, and she was a goose to feel the parting so keenly, when the pain was all on her side.

"But we shall meet again sometime; besides, girls cannot do much for one — they know so little."

"And this is the end of all our friendship?"

"No, it is not the end; for I shall always like you, no matter if you are ignorant. I ought to like you, for you have done everything for me."

"I do not want any one to like me from duty, but I believe that is all the kind of affection you are capable of. I shall get another friend directly, and one not wrapped up in bugs and spiders." Her sentence, though bravely spoken, ended in something very like a sob.

"Angela, we must not quarrel," said Donald, "and you must not get any one in my place. I

believe I would give up everything rather than that. I did not know how much I cared until you spoke just now. Won't you have patience with me? for God must have me to like these studies. Won't you say good-by kindly, and keep me for best friend — your dearest, best, ever and always?"

She turned a very glad though rather wet face to him. "And will you be my best friend ever and always? Promise me that you won't get to like those musty old professors better than you do me."

"I promise;" he held out his hand to say good-by. Angela gave him her hand and glanced half-timidly into the face looking intently at her. It was sunburned; even the forehead, over which there generally fell a tangle of brown, curly hair, was white only where the hair screened it from the sunshine, for Donald had a weakness for going in his bare head in the open air; but the face itself was as finely chiseled as any the old Greeks have sent down to us as types of their own high civilization, and with character enough for a dozen such faces as Lewis Moxton's.

"Good-by, Donald," putting her little soft hand into his brown one. It was the first time they had ever touched hands, except by accident.

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"What a tender little hand, Angela," he said ;
"it could never be good for anything but ornament. May be that is all you were made for."

"It is not all, Donald ; I pray to God every day, to let me work for him. I do not ask for the kind of work I would like. I leave that all with him. He is going to answer my prayers somehow, some day."

"I began to do that to-day. My father asked me to, but I am not willing to trust all to God. I do not want to be a minister. I hate to be working among people — you have no idea how tiresome they are to me."

"Why, Donald, how foolish you are. God does not want us to do things we were not intended to do. I am sure he does not want you to preach ; for one thing, you can't talk very well ; your words have a habit of sticking, you know, and preachers, more than any one, need to talk easy ; besides, you have talent for other things."

"Those are very encouraging words. You have the faculty of helping one out of discouragements more than any one I know."

She paid little heed to his compliment, for her mind was full of the other thought.

"You had better keep right on praying, only

you must be willing for God to have his way with you, or it is not much use to pray, I think; you will hinder his plans."

"I wish you would pray for me, Angela."

"Why, Donald, I do that every day of my life. You do not think I cared for you so little as that?"

"I never thought about it, and I never prayed once for you."

"Well, you need not do so, if you will just pray for yourself. I have a great deal more time, and besides, I love to pray to God."

"I believe, Angela, you are a long way ahead of me in some things." He dropped the tender little hand, cast another look at the cabinet, and was gone.

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CHAPTER IX.

BOARDING-SCHOOL.

THE following year was a very tedious one to Angela. The Moxtons still came, but Lewis, if possible, made slower progress than ever. Angela, who was determined to show Donald that she was good for something beside ornament, studied harder than ever, and she found Lewis a great hinderance to her, as they studied together. They were both preparing for college, for Angela had made up her mind to take the full course. It would take them still another year of hard study before they would be able to matriculate, and the Moxtons were reckoning on having the same school privileges for another year, but Miss Buckingham advised Angela to go to a boarding-school, where she would have a better opportunity for learning other things than mere text-book knowledge.

Donald did not come home the following year.

One of the professors was anxious to have him accompany him to the sunny Southland, where creeping things abound, and of course he most joyfully accepted the offered situation, which was both remunerative and flattering to so youthful a naturalist. For a while, in her disappointment in not seeing Donald, Angela felt as if her hard work had been expended in vain, since he was not coming home. Miss Buckingham, too, was going away, probably never to revisit the Pines. She had come from England some years ago, as governess in a family, and when her work there was ended, Angela's father had secured her for a teacher for his own little daughter, then less than ten years of age. No wonder that Angela looked out now rather dismally on the future, separated from her two best friends indefinitely, for Miss Buckingham had such a horror of ocean travel, nothing but the desire to be once more with her kindred would have induced her to cross it; while Donald was so absorbed in his own pursuits he was little more to her now than a stranger. He mentioned her name in every letter home, but he had never written to her directly, and one letter all to herself would have pleased her better than scores of second-hand messages.

She left the Pines with Miss Buckingham; the latter remained through the holidays merely to keep her company. When they came to say good-by on the crowded steamer, amid the pushing, self-absorbed throng, Angela realized that her feeling of desolation would have been slight in comparison, if their adieus had been spoken within the shelter of her own somber pines. She went directly to the school, and here, too, all was strange. For a while she was inclined to regret that her desire to please Donald had led her so far. The school was a large one with a corresponding staff of professors, and everything in connection with the institution calculated to inspire the students with ambition to excel in the work for which they were there.

Angela never felt herself so willing to forget herself in books as now, since they helped her to forget her own heart's loneliness; no one in all the world to be very glad or sorry at her success or failure, for Lindsay took vastly more interest in the farm and her belongings generally than the intellectual development of its youthful mistress. After Lindsay there was no one who could be expected to take more than secondary interest in her; Miss Buckingham had a widowed mother with sisters and their children to fill the

place in her affections that Angela might otherwise have possessed. Economy not being a necessity in Angela's case, Miss Buckingham, who made all the arrangements for her in the school, secured her one of the very best rooms, and stipulated that she was to occupy it solely, unless she was anxious for a roommate. As the weeks wore on, and she became better acquainted with her schoolfellows, she resolved to take a roommate so soon as she could secure one who satisfied her rather fastidious tastes.

Some of the girls, like herself, had plenty of spending money, others were there at considerable sacrifice; but none of them came quite within the requirements of her helpfulness, until one day there came a student, some weeks after the term had begun, whose appearance appealed at once to Angela's sympathies. She was a gentle-faced girl, dressed in shabby black, and looking both frightened and sad-hearted. Angela's sympathies were aroused at once, especially when she observed that the others were inclined to sneer at the new-comer — not so much at herself, for nature had fitted her out as gracefully as the best of them, but at the poor equipment of dry goods she brought with her. At first Angela made no friendly advances, since the girl

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was in none of her classes, but the wistful face was growing more pitiful, while her classmates maintained a frigid bearing. As they were walking through the corridors at the close of the last session for the day, Angela went to her, and linking her arm with that of the new-comer, said:

"My name is Angela Marlowe; if I wait for an introduction we may be strangers for a long time."

"My name is Dora Keith."

"A very pretty name," Angela remarked, for want of something better to say.

"I shall be glad if any of you can like any thing belonging to me." Dora spoke low, but there was a plaintiveness about her speech more touching than the words themselves.

"O, yes! we shall like you very much when we get better acquainted. You are at a disadvantage coming so late. We have all got our friendships made, you see, and it makes us indifferent to new-comers."

"I could not come any earlier, and I am sorry, for it is hard to have no friends in such a crowd."

"You shall have one friend. I enjoy having some one to make happy, so I will take you; none of the others need me very much."

Dora Keith looked at her curiously. Was the girl quite sensible? she wondered, for she talked like some budding philanthropist looking for subjects upon whom to experiment. Angela, fortunately, was in blissful ignorance of the thoughts going on under cover of her protégé's brain.

"Come with me until study hour begins; do you room alone?"

"Yes; in the attic. I could not afford to have a room," she said honestly.

"Why, you must be all alone, then?"

"Yes."

"Are you frightened?"

"O, no! I rather like it; when I get up there I partly forget that there are so many curious eyes to look at me."

Angela opened her door. It led into a daintily furnished room, most of its adornments having been put there at her own expense.

"Oh! what a lovely room, and so homelike. I never saw anything so pretty before."

"I am glad you like it, for I mean to share it with you. I won't have another bed put up, for that would spoil it, but we will get a sofa bed, and we can have it to lounge on when we are tired."

"You do not mean to have me share this expensive room—to stay in it, day and night, without charging me anything extra? I could not do it, for I am poor and cannot afford a single luxury."

"Why, certainly you won't have to pay any thing extra."

"But why do you ask me?"

"Do you think I could lie here snug and warm at night with people all around within calling distance, and feel that I was doing as I would wish to be done by when I left you up there in the cold, with nothing but mice within reach of your voice?"

"I do not know what to think, only that you must be different from every one else in the world."

"Oh! no, indeed; you do not know many people yet. There are a great many people with beautiful souls. You know very often the outside and inside of people does not correspond."

"Well, you are lovely altogether, but still I cannot accept your offer. It would not be honest for me to take it, but if you will let me feel that I can come here when I get very lonely, and be welcome, I shall be so glad, and I won't disturb you. The teachers told me when it was cold to

spend all my study hours in the schoolrooms, but they are lonelier than my own garret; they remind me so" — she stopped there, and did not finish the sentence.

Angela fancied that she was going to say that they reminded her of the cold glances she met every day.

"They think a great deal of rich people here, and I am pretty rich."

Angela spoke as impersonally on the subject as if she had been discussing a victim of the mumps.

"When I am intimate with you the rest will be, for I have the prettiest room, and they like to come here, every one of them, I believe," she added with a sigh, for her room was more of a thoroughfare than even she, with her generous nature, craved. "I am going to take you for best friend, too; I haven't really selected one yet, but a good many have asked for the position."

Angela was dismayed to see her newly selected friend burst into an uncontrollable fit of weeping; surely that was a strange way to receive her proffered friendship.

"Don't you wish to have me for best friend?" she asked after awhile when the emotion had somewhat subsided.

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"O, yes! I shall love you better than any one in the world; but I was not expecting anything, and you give me so much, and just when my heart was so heavy."

"I am glad that was all you had to cry for. I could not quite understand; I am not given to crying, and such quantities of tears frightened me. It must hurt to cry so," she added sympathetically.

"No; it is what goes before that hurts. I wish my mother could know."

"You can write to her, and just say I am going to get each of us a pretty winter suit; I haven't got mine yet, and I want my best friend to dress just like me."

"My mother is dead, and I am in mourning for her — at least I got the best I could afford," she added, casting a rueful glance at the one dress that had to do duty for best and worst.

"My mother is dead, too, and I never wore a particle of mourning for her. I am sure your mother would not mind if you took it off. Was she a Christian?"

"Yes; her death was more like a translation, she was so happy."

"Then it is not necessary for you to wear black. I did not for either of my parents."

Angela did not mention the fact that she was

scarcely a day old when she lost her mother, which was an excellent reason for not putting on mourning, while her father charged Lindsay not to sadden his beloved child with so much as a black ribbon when he was freed from the loneliness of life, and its pains.

On the following Saturday Angela got one of the younger teachers to accompany her on a round of shopping, that included a complete outfit for herself and her best friend. Miss Buckingham, at Lindsay's suggestion, had stipulated that she might have a certain amount each month for spending money; thus far she had kept within the limited sum. Probably she had never realised so keenly how convenient it is to have a full purse. The shopping proceeded very satisfactorily; the frocks and cloaks were bought, and then they proceeded to the millinery store, Angela meanwhile thinking more of the effect her purchases would have on Dora than herself.

"Won't she look so pretty in this hat!" she exclaimed, holding up a dainty bit of millinery.

"They will be becoming to both of you."

"I do not care so much for myself, for I have always had plenty of hats, and she never has; you know that makes a great difference. I wonder how it feels to be poor and to have

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to reckon every penny you lay out," she said reflectively.

"Very inconvenient sometimes, as many of us know to our sorrow."

"It must be interesting, though, to count up your money and see how far you can make it go. I mean, after I am my own mistress, to give away so much that I shall know what it is like."

"I hope you may live to put your plan into execution."

"I am pretty certain of living, for I can do so much more good in this world than in Heaven; I should say by this time there were plenty of ministering spirits, so many holy people have died, you know; if I were to die my money would be divided among my relatives across the sea, who are all strangers to me, and Lindsay says they are rich enough already; probably they would just put my money in the bank with their own, and it would do no good at all."

The teacher smiled, but made no reply, although it did occur to her to ask Angela why she spoke with such assurance about going to Heaven; it was not customary in her experience of boarding-school misses to hear them speak of that unknown land.

CHAPTER X.

SISTER DORA.

THE garments were duly received that evening, and Dora was invited to Angela's room to inspect them. To all other applicants for admission, the single inhospitable word, "Engaged," had been spoken. This was all the more provoking to said applicants, since it was generally known that a box had arrived that day from the Pines; a box from there was an event, for every one of the young ladies was invited to share in its contents, and Lindsay was unanimously conceded to be the best compounder of good things they ever knew. A summons to Angela's room was, therefore, always anxiously expected.

Dora came down from her nest under the roof very joyously in response to Angela's invitation at teatime, for the time forgetting that a small martyrdom awaited her on the morrow when she must appear with the others, when they gathered

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for church, in her very shabby garments. Angela had her dry goods laid out to the best advantage on the table, and when Dora came in she was sitting demurely waiting to see the effect her purchases would make.

"Oh! what lovely things, and such quantities of them," Dora said, pausing abruptly by the table.

"We will look just like sisters when we get dressed alike. People will say, 'Aren't those sisters just too sweet for anything?' That is what I often hear them say," Angela added by way of explanation.

"Did you mean some of these for me to wear?" Dora's eyes were shining as she surveyed them with fresh interest.

"Why, certainly; I just want you to try them on, and then we will put them away, for I must have a tea-party to-night, for Lindsay's good things may not keep until Monday evening."

"What will they say if you buy my clothes for me?"

"Whatever they like; they will look just as nicely, no matter what they say."

Angela watched with deep satisfaction the effect of the rich ostrich plume nestling amid the brown braids, as Dora tried on the hat; the

temptation to do so was too strong, no matter what they might say. To see herself just once in a becoming hat was something to remember.

"Won't the teachers be angry when they find you have spent so much money on me?"

"Miss Hunter was with me, and she seemed to think it was a very comfortable thing to have more money than one wants for themselves."

"I don't think I could let any other girl in the world but you do this for me, but then, I do not think there is another girl in the world just like you."

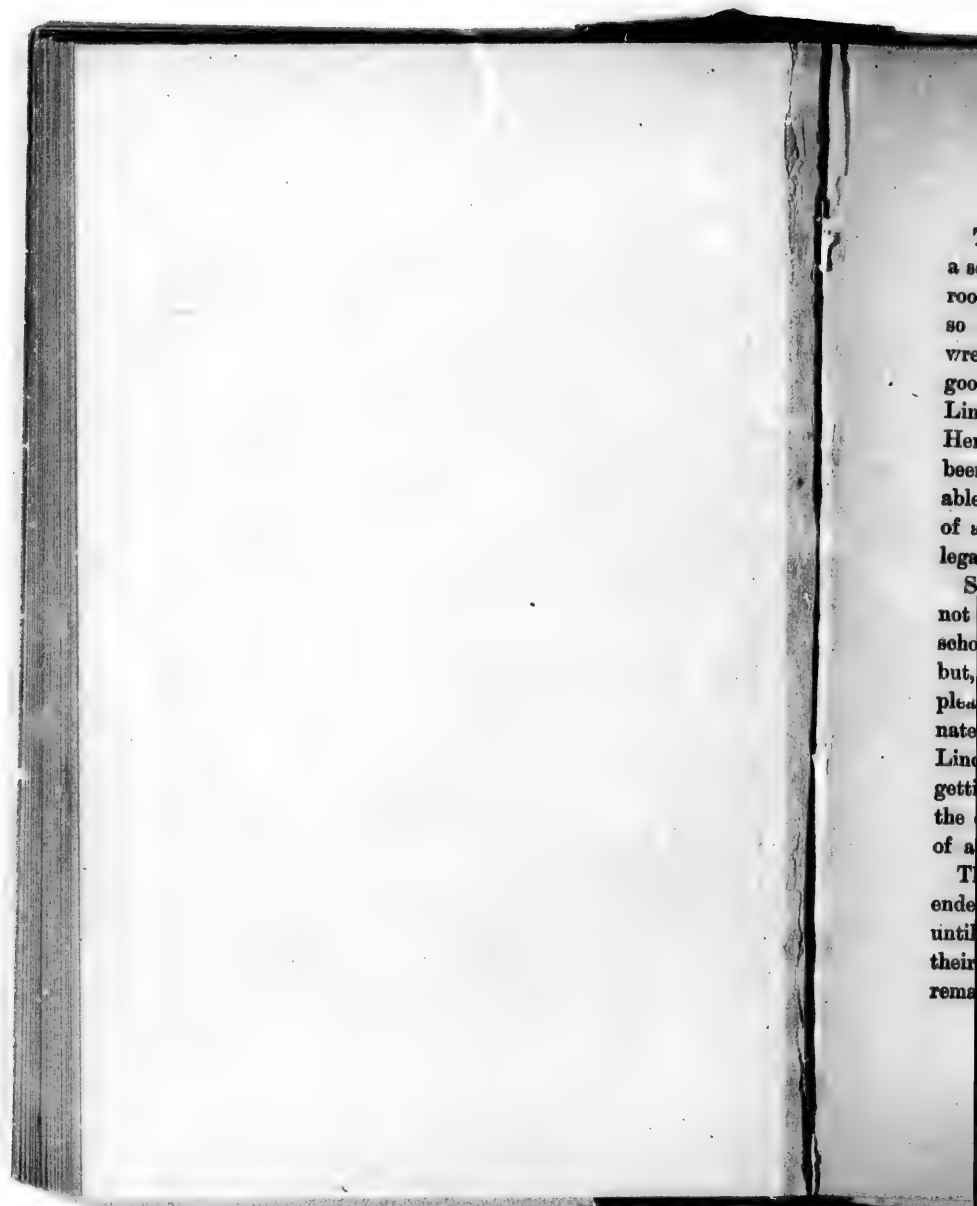
Dora turned, and with an uncontrollable burst of affection took Angela in her arms, kissing her fondly.

There was another tap at the door, to which Angela responded presently, while she swept hats, boots and garments generally into a trunk, and then bade her guest enter, looking meanwhile considerably flushed and guilty; concealment, even in a worthy cause, was so foreign to her nature, it was painful to her. Dora was sitting as far in the shadow as possible, and was not at first noticed by the visitor.

"I have another box — a large one — and I want all the girls to come. You and Dora please go around and invite them while I get ready."



THE THEAT IN ANGELA'S ROOM.



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The girls did as commanded, each one taking a separate corridor. In a few minutes Angela's room was overflowing with damsels, waiting like so many hungry birds to be fed, while Angela wrestled with hammer and nails, until finally the goodly array of edibles was spread before them. Lindsay knew nothing of the horrors of dyspepsia. Her forefathers, from force of circumstance, had been abstemious livers, and consequently she was able to enjoy whatever presented itself, because of a healthy digestion — one of the few precious legacies she had inherited.

She could not understand why Angela should not supplement the plain fare of the boarding-school with rich compounds agreeable to the taste, but, like the forbidden fruit, apt to make it unpleasant afterward for the consumer. Fortunately for Angela, she was so generous with Lindsay's delicacies there was no danger of her getting more than was good for her, since, in the division, her share was usually the smallest of any.

The work of distribution and consumption was ended at last, but still the girls lingered around until the study bell rang, when they hastened to their rooms, leaving Angela in the midst of the remains which had to be cleared away before

bedtime. Dora lingered till they had all left, when the garments were taken from their hiding-place for her to carry to her room. Angela kept the dress, promising to have it ready for the following Sunday, but Dora waited a moment longer to cast an admiring glance at the soft blue cashmere with its plush trimmings. What a glad-hearted girl it was that blithely ascended the long flights of stairs to the bare, chill garret, with no companionship save the sly quadrupeds that seem the natural enemy of womenkind.

Dora concluded that night, as she examined her gifts at her leisure — for no teacher took the trouble to climb up there to see if she studied her lessons — that she could easily love everybody after the lesson in love she had just received.

The following week the pretty frocks were made, and after that the world looked a good deal brighter to the soft brown eyes gazing out over the city's spires and chimneys from the eyrie in the top of the huge building. A good many sorrows can be assuaged in youthful hearts by becoming garments, and the woes of youth are not usually very lasting. Dora was a bright student, and soon reflected credit on her adopted sister; at the close of the first term she came out with the best essay that was produced.

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The solitude of her situation, or its elevation above the world and things in general may have had their influence, but the teachers were beginning to regard her as the one most likely to be heard from in after years, of all that crowd of young maidens. She was rapidly effacing Donald's image from Angela's heart, she was so much more responsive to affection's touch; indeed, that was the only perplexity about their intercourse, for Angela's long association with Donald had made her very shy about revealing her heart, and she liked best, both for herself and others, to carry her feelings well under control; by deeds rather than words, proving that there was a rich mine of affection beneath the surface. It was somewhat surprising that Angela's two dearest friends thus far were more than usually studious and successful in mastering the intricacies of study, while she was herself reckoned among the least brilliant in the school; but this fact did not trouble her now as heretofore, for Dora seemed to love her if possible even better after some signal failure in her studies, and never hinted that stupidity or ignorance should be the slightest bar to their intimacy in future years, as Donald had an unfortunate habit of doing.

When the weather got very cold, Dora used

to come timidly knocking at Angela's door in study hours, shivering with the cold, and scarcely able to go on with her studies. It was no use for Angela to plead with her to share the comforts of her own room; but a severe cold taken at Christmas, and which increased as the days went by, contrary to the usage of well-regulated colds, compelled others beside Angela to interpose. She was soon too sick to be in the room with any one, when she was put into a large, pleasant room used as a hospital for the sick students. Here she rested in the comfortable easy-chair, or lay in the warm bed, her cough not nearly so painful when the air that entered the tender lungs was tempered by a grateful warmth. She began to think it was nearly as nice to be sick as well, especially when Angela sat with her studying the lessons aloud for both.

Her life had always been a hard one. None but the bravest would have forced their way to such a position as she now occupied, every inch of the way having been fought for desperately. As she lay there she got delicious glimpses, even in her pain, of what life might be if one did not have to fight and work all the time, to make their way through the crowded thoroughfare through which her path had led.

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"How delightful it is to be warm, and to have pretty things to look at, with nothing to do but lie and rest when one is so weak and tired. I did not know how tired I was until I got the chance to rest and be warm," she said one day in a pause in the lesson Angela was studying — the pauses, it must be confessed, were frequent.

"I never thought about it particularly, but I expect it is. You see, I was never very sick in my life, nor very tired either."

"It must seem odd to be able to work or rest just as you like. I have had to work ever since I was such a tiny child," she continued, with unconscious pathos. "This is the first long rest I have had since I was old enough to pull bastings and learn the alphabet. I do not think I was more than three years old when I began to help my mother. She was so ambitious for me — wanted that I should be a scholar, and not have to sew for a living. She thought I might be clever — you know mothers always think the very best of their children," she added apologetically.

"And you are clever," Angela said, winking very hard, for there had come an unwelcome moisture into her eyes, caused by Dora's story of her childhood.

"I wonder if I have had all my struggles in

vain? Do you think when we die that we get any better start in the next life if we have tried to make the most of ourselves here — I mean that part of us that goes on to other worlds?" She spoke dreamily; as if those other unknown worlds were beginning to seem more real and blessed than the one in which she had found such hard fighting to make her way worthily.

"Surely you are not thinking of dying — of leaving me alone." As if one could do otherwise when the flame refused to burn longer.

"I cannot make myself live when the doctors fail," she said, with a wan smile. "If I had my choice I would certainly get well and work harder than ever to be a scholar some day — have the right to lie down and rest when I was tired, and to have a pretty place to take my rest in," she added presently, as if that would be as desirable as the rest itself.

"You shall come home with me next summer and rest all the time; I will fit up a room any way you wish," Angela said eagerly.

"I have always had such happy fancies about the Pines since first you told me the name of your home. I could not tell you how I have longed to go there with you, some happy summer when I could afford it; I have tried to imagine

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the birds and bees flitting among the trees and flowers — the orchards in bloom, and then with their gift of fruitage — the wide, clean fields without houses and people. I have always been so crowded you cannot imagine how I enjoyed that whole flat under the roof all to myself, the whole night long, until it got so cold."

"Next summer you shall have all the space you want. I heard Lindsay complaining once in house-cleaning time, of the quantities of space they had to go over. She said there were twenty rooms, besides closets. Then you shall have all out doors; there is only Wardell, except in busy seasons, and then the men all sleep at their own homes."

Angela talked eagerly; as if she would try to hire Dora to postpone that other long journey leading on to the eternities and infinities, until that dim, tiresome period when old age shuts us out from the keener joys of this world, perhaps attempting to make us willing to leave them for youth and eternal gladness, but finding the attempt a vain one in so many cases.

"Next summer — where will I be then? what wonderful visions may I not have seen? O, Angela! it must be lovely to die, no matter whether we are young or old, if God only takes us where

he is. I get trying to think what Heaven is like when I lie here at night and remember what you have told me about the Pines; you know I never once saw the real country — where things were left just as God made them. You would not mind very much if you knew I was living somewhere just as really as I lived here — perhaps more keenly, grandly alive than any one ever is on this earth, that has no light of its own."

She paused, and turned an eager look on Angela, who was apparently absorbed in her book, but Dora knew better, and went on:

"You surely would not feel badly, dear, if you knew I was still loving you somewhere, just as really as I loved you here? That will be one reason why I shall be glad to die now; I won't ever love any one better than you."

"I would not care if you did, if only you wouldn't die," Angela sobbed.

"I used to beg my mother not to die — as if she would willingly have left her only child orphaned," Dora murmured softly.

"I understand your meaning," Angela whispered. "Won't you promise me, though, to do everything you can to get well? I want to be president myself, and told him to get the best doctors in the city, and I would pay their bills."

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"What did he say?" with a look of unutterable affection at the bright, loving creature so eager to hold her back from death.

"He said they would do everything in their power for you; it was wicked to leave you up there in the cold, but they had forgotten you were there."

"It was my own fault," Dora said gently. "When I came here I told them how little money I had, and asked permission to sleep on one of the forms in the schoolroom, and take whatever might be left to go to waste from the table for my food. I think they pitied me, for they said I should come to the table with the rest, and they would fit up a bed for me in the attic. It was so much better than I expected, I should have been quite happy at once, if the young ladies had not looked at me as they did; but then you took me up so soon, and it has been all sunshine since then; I am so glad God gave me a little bit of brightness before he took me out of the world; one likes to know something of all sorts of experiences."

"Don't let us talk any more," Angela sobbed. "I will go on studying these Greek verbs," she added, after a long silence, when she had got her feelings under control sufficiently to speak calmly.

"Very well, dear; I will learn them with you," Dora said patiently, although she felt like any thing just then but wrestling with verbs of any kind.

In the long hours of solitude, when she bore her pain in silence, the belief had slowly forced itself upon her that only for a little while would she need the speech of mortals. At first there had been the natural shrinking from death, but by degrees her thoughts had been going out into clearer light, and the world unseen was coming nearer, and she was finding that —

"The soul's dark cottage, battered and decayed,
Let in new light through chinks disease had made."

The bitterest parting of all was with Angela — sister Angela, as she called her now in her heart. Sometimes, too, in a timid way, when she addressed her, she would say, dear little sister; but she noticed at such times, the deepening color in the fine, clear-cut face, and the quivering lip, for Angela could hardly bear anything now either in speech or manner that was specially tender from Dora. She still talked eagerly of the summer time, when Dora was to lie in the hammock in the rose garden, and listen to the robins and swal-

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lows, and all the feathered creatures whose homes were built in the quiet gardens and woods at the Pines. Dora used to lie with a wistful, dreamy look on her face, while Angela discussed their plans, as if she were listening to other voices that no ears save her own could hear, and sometimes, it must be confessed, wishing with a melancholy regret, that this great joy had not come so late, but surely she would still be among the gardens and song birds of another country.

One day when Angela had been reading to her from a well-worn copy of "The Imitation of Christ" — which, with the Bible and hymn book, were all the literature she craved — she interrupted the reading by asking, "Do those small marble head-stones cost much?"

Angela laid down the book and for an instant turned paler than the face on the pillow, which often wore now the flush of apparent health. "Not very much; did you want one for your mother?" she asked, as if that were the only possible reason there could be for such a question.

"I was not thinking about her, but I have wished so many times I could have something to remind you of me. I have my mother's wedding ring, and some books; perhaps if they were sold they might get nearly enough, and you could give

something. I would like you to put on it — 'Dora, from sister Angela.' "

" People that are alive and well do not need gravestones; and then, it would not be a gift from me if your own money bought it." Angela spoke a trifle impatiently.

" I did not think of that; but you would pay something on it — just a few dollars. Some day I would like you to bring your own little children and tell them about me — how you helped me to know what a lovely world this is just for a short while before God took me to a still better world."

" You are not going to die, darling; you look nearly as well as ever."

For some time there had been no mention of death or other worlds, and Angela was growing quite cheerful, and getting accustomed to see her friend lie idly in her bed, all her ambition for study gone.

" I shall never be quite so well any other day as I am to-day, for each hour the disease is getting nearer the life mark. I am sorry to grieve you, dear" — Angela's head was buried out of sight in the bedclothes now, and her whole frame shaken convulsively — " but I wanted to tell you some things I should like you to think of when I am gone."

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She was silent for awhile, the thin, trembling hand gently stroking the bowed head.

"Wouldn't it be nice, dear, for you to take some other girl in my place? I have been thinking so much about your home, and the deep skies above it, not shut out of sight by grim houses. Oh! if you knew how some hearts are stifling here you would let them have a glimpse of what Heaven is like through your green fields and gardens."

She paused timidly, afraid lest Angela might think she had asked too much.

"I will do anything you wish," the answer came, low and brokenly.

"And will you always call me sister Dora in your heart?"

There was such longing in the voice — all the heart loneliness of her life found expression in that brief sentence.

"Yes." The answer came with a sob.

For a while they were silent, and then Angela whispered, "Wherever you go won't you call me sister?"

"Oh! I shall be so glad; I am certain the mere looking on death won't make me forget."

No further words were spoken until the nurse came and Angela was dismissed to her own room.

For her sake, as well as Dora's, the time they were permitted to be together was brief. No doubt the germs of consumption were lurking in Dora's system, received partly by inheritance, and then developed by the lack of proper nourishment, and hardship of various kinds from childhood.

It did not take the disease long to complete its work. One morning Angela went as usual to inquire for her friend, and was met at the door by the nurse, who told her the end had come.

"It is curious that one so young should be able to sense about things as she did."

"What things?" Angela asked through her tears. How she longed to know every word that had been uttered, to discover how Death really looked when Dora saw him face to face.

"Why, she seemed to realize better than most I see die, that the Lord had died specially for her, and was waiting to take her right into glory. She wa'n't the least mite afraid. It's curious the way folks act when they come to die." The woman generalized too much to please Angela.

"Did she leave any message for me?" she asked wistfully.

"Yes; she wanted to see you, but we concluded we'd best not waken you out of a sound

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sleep in the middle of the night. It's always trying on young folks, especially when you disturb them to see a friend die. She told me to tell you she'd be looking for you all along for sixty or seventy years, and that you needn't be fearing death all your life, for it wasn't much, after all. She kept her faculties wonderful. I believe she'd been uncommon smart if she'd lived. I never watched by one just like her."

"Was that all?"

"Well, it's about as much as I can remember. I've a dreadful poor memory for conversation. Maybe I'll think of some more by and by," she added, seeing how eagerly Angela was waiting for some further and last messages from her friend.

"Yes, I do remember. Just the last thing she opened her eyes sort of quick, as if she saw more than the rest of us, and said: 'Tell Angela she will be a sister to a great many. I understand more now.' She never spoke again, only to ask to be moved. Like most of the dying, she was restless at the last."

Angela shivered. Across her young life Death had again cast his shadow. She turned away, not asking to see the battered case that had contained the jewel she called friend, nor did she

enter the room again until long weeks after, when another schoolmate had been taken there, and particularly requested to see her. The tombstone was bought, and the words carved upon it that Dora desired, and Angela went back to the routine of daily study, feeling a loneliness that all the merry throng of schoolmates could not banish.

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CHAPTER XI.

IN THE SLUMS.

As the midsummer holidays drew near, Angela became increasingly anxious to fulfill her promise made to Dora, to take some one who longed for it, to the pure stillness of the country. She confided her anxiety to Miss Hunter, who, more than any of the teachers, drew her confidence, and she felt sure she would give her good advice.

"What an odd fancy for one at your age," was the rather unsympathetic response to her request.

"A great many people do it. I have read such interesting stories about the children who have been taken to the country for a few weeks, and how good and happy they were."

"You must not believe all the stories you read; it is vastly easier to be unselfish and philanthropic on paper than in actual life."

"Is it right to choose those things that are

easiest? If the Lord Jesus had done that where would our world have been by this time?"

"The case is different. He left Heaven to redeem this lost world; no one else could have done it."

"It may be no one else will help those I am anxious to take to the country. I shall choose the ones who know nothing about what is good."

"Why, my dear girl, they will be the worst ones for you to undertake. You have no idea how dreadfully wicked even little children become when they have only evil influences surrounding them."

"You will go with me in search of that kind, for they need us most?"

"It will be easy finding such; all we need do is to go to some mission chapel in the worst parts of the city and make known your desire."

"Shall we go next Sunday?" Angela asked eagerly.

"Yes, if you are determined; but remember, I have warned you of what the consequences may be. No doubt you have many valuable articles about your house. I would advise you to keep them securely under lock and key."

"Lindsay will attend to that," Angela said

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with a smile, well knowing that Lindsay's objections and forebodings would exceed Miss Hunter's.

The following Sunday afternoon Angela and her teacher started out on their mission of mercy. The walk was a long one, through streets that were desolate enough to cast a shadow over any one merely passing through them, when they realized that thousands of women and little children had to stay in those pent-up places day and night, summer and winter, until the weary bodies lay down in the deep sleep, finding a rest at last among the green trees and grasses they had longed for, but longed in vain.

"I wonder will some of them come from this street?" Angela shivered as she spoke. The place was so dark and vile it seemed a pollution to be in it at all. "I am so glad Dora thought of it."

"The poor thing knew all about it, for her whole life had been spent in such places as this until you knew her."

The tears were standing in Angela's eyes as she glanced around timidly. There were such sights and sounds on every side, no wonder she was afraid. Miss Hunter, too, looked a little uneasy.

"I am afraid I have done wrong in permitting you to come here, running such risks."

"What risks?"

She hesitated, and then said evasively, "Well, one risk is the taking children from such places to your innocent home."

"What do you think the Lord Jesus would say if he were walking here with us to-day, and could tell me what to do?"

"I expect He would advise you to do just what you are intending to do."

"Don't you think He would say that clean houses were not worth so much as human souls for whom He died? You know I may teach them to love Him. I shall try to."

They reached the chapel at last. It was located in one of the worst streets of the great city. The faces they saw watching them through the doors and windows were sodden and evil, in keeping with the vile, ill-smelling place where they burrowed. It was with a feeling of relief they gained the shelter of the chapel, as if they had got back to humanizing influences, and the light Christianity sheds.

Angela turned and looked back through the dreadful way they had come.

"I expect all the world would be just like this

"If it were not for our pure religion," she said reflectively. "Don't you think it very strange that Christian people can sit quietly in their homes while they know they have such neighbors?"

"What can they do? These people have the same chance in the world that the rest of us have; it is their own fault that they are so wretched."

"If they were born here and don't know any better, how can they help themselves? The people who have the best chances to be good find it hard to keep straight always, so what can we expect from these?"

"Well, it seems that we need not expect any thing but what is evil from them or their children. If whole colonies of them could be transported somewhere out of reach of the better class of humanity, it would be a fortunate thing."

"Death is exporting them somewhere out of our reach every day, but I believe it is as much our duty to make them good men and women as it is to try to be such ourselves."

Angela spoke in a hopeless way, however, for the oaths that were every few moments borne to them on the heavy, languorous air were discouraging to so youthful and innocent a reformer.

When they entered the chapel they were sur-

prised to find it such a cheering contrast to the street. Still, its interior was as plain as Mission chapels usually are, its sole ornamentation a few cheap pictures and mottoes. There were painted forms, a small platform with reading desk and cane-seated arm chairs, a large stove near the entrance, and that comprised its entire furnishing. There was a fair gathering of children, dirty, ill-clad, and, for the most part, ill-looking, Angela decided after she had taken a hasty survey of the room.

A young man was presiding at the desk, and a pale, tired-faced girl whom they afterward discovered to be a missionary among the people here, sat near him. There were several other young men, and a few middle-aged women, sitting with the different groups of children, presumably their teachers. The young man who seemed to have charge cordially welcomed the new-comers, while they were critically surveyed by every boy and girl in the room. Angela returned the gaze quite as critically, since she had considerably more anxiety on the matter of appearances than they. Miss Hunter made known their errand at once to the superintendent, who showed more expressively by his face than words, the mixture of surprise and pleasure he felt.

"How many shall you take, and how long are they to stay with you?" he asked.

"I had not thought about it particularly, but they can stay until they get tired. I would prefer the poorest ones, who most need a change."

"Probably if you keep them until they get tired they will never return. That is the usual experience of the few who get a chance in the country for a few weeks."

"Won't two do to begin with?" Miss Hunter asked.

"We have room for a score, but Lindsay might object to so many," Angela responded cautiously.

"One could not blame her if she did; a dozen of these let into a country house would work more mischief in a week than could be repaired in a twelvemonth."

"You would be surprised how well the majority of them conduct themselves, when they are sent to the generous people who volunteer to take one or two for a holiday in the country," the superintendent said gently.

"How many had I better invite?" Angela turned to him with an air of relief; he could decide better than any one.

"I would suggest two to begin with — but,

excuse me, will your friends be willing for you to take these city waifs?"

"I have no one to consult save my housekeeper. I am quite certain she will object to a single one, so I might as well have trouble with a good many as only one." She spoke with the calmness born of certain conviction. The superintendent smiled, but said nothing farther by way of remonstrance.

"There are two that I would like you to take if you are not anxious to make the selection yourself."

"Oh! no, indeed; you are the best judge in the matter."

"They need help about as much as any, and they are as good and trusty as any in the school — a brother and sister. Perhaps you are not willing to include boys in your charity," he added, seeing the quick glance of surprise she bestowed on him.

"I did not think of taking boys, but if you think best I will take one. I dare not venture on two." Lindsay's possible wrath at even one was making her quake already.

"I shall not ask for any more, but you will find this lad easier to control than most of the girls. He is a fine, manly fellow, much superior to his sister. but I could not separate them. He

seems to have quite a fatherly care over her, and I know he would not consent to go without her."

"Have they no parents?"

"No; they are orphans, but were well trained while their mother lived, and were under good home influences. It is the old story, too often repeated, of persons unfitted for the struggle for life in a city, coming here to earn their bread with no proper way of doing it. The father's health failed in the country and he came to the city thinking to get light work suited to his strength, but he died very soon; his wife had no trade — could play on the piano indifferently, paint in much the same way, do fancy work that no one cared for, and that was her equipment for success. She did not long outlast her husband, leaving these children to care for themselves."

"Are they here?" Angela asked, the whole miserable picture passing quickly before her mind.

"Yes; do you see that little girl just in front by the lady in gray? Her eyes are fixed just now very admiringly on you — very sharp black eyes, if you stop to examine them."

Angela nodded her head, too much interested in studying the face of her new child to otherwise respond. The boy was next pointed out — a fine,

open-faced lad with blue eyes, broad forehead over which the brown curls clustered very prettily Angela thought, but the face was painfully hungry-looking and pinched. How those thin cheeks would round out on the well-cooked, abundant food at the Pines!

"Who takes care of them?" was her eager inquiry!

"They mostly take care of themselves. We give them soup tickets and what cast-off garments we can spare, and they have to attend to the rest themselves."

"Where do they live?"

"Anywhere they can find a place to sleep in. They usually come here to eat their bite and to warm themselves; it is the only home they know. When nothing else offers I have let them sleep here. I could not turn them out on a freezing night, without so much as a blanket to wrap around them."

"Please do not tell me any more now." Her eyes were full of tears, her lips quivering with suppressed emotion.

"You would soon get used to such things, and you would be surprised how happy they are over such a little thing, and they remember pleasures so long—I mean all of these children. We are

planning to take them all to the seashore some day this summer, if we can afford it. Some of your rich people who expect to go to Europe, and to spend thousands of dollars on the trip, do not look forward to it with a tithe of the satisfaction that these children do to that one day in the country with all the good food they can eat."

"You surely won't disappoint them?" Angela asked anxiously.

"Not if we can help it; but money is very scarce with us, and often we cannot do all that we wish."

"Would it cost a great deal of money?" she asked with a little catching of the breath.

"Well, it depends on how you reckon very much. The railroad takes them for almost nothing, but they have to be fed. I do not think at the least calculation we can do it for less than twenty-five dollars, and that is a good deal to make up for one day's pleasuring."

"Never think of disappointing them for such a small sum. I will be glad to supply the money." She had her pocket-book out in an instant, and the money placed in his hands before he had time to recover from his surprise.

"I wish it might take place before I go home; I should like so much to accompany them and

see their enjoyment. I would take flowers and confectionery, and I am sure Lindsay will send me a box from home — they would enjoy her good things so much."

"We will go whenever it is convenient for you. I will tell the children now what you have done for them."

He touched the bell, which was the signal for the teachers to suspend operations, and then acquainted them with the gift they had just received, and the way it was to be expended. A low murmur of approval broke the stillness, with a few involuntary ejaculations that sounded very much like "golly" to Angela's ears.

Her face now was shining — the sweetest face he had ever seen, the superintendent decided, as he glanced at her.

"If there is any particular day you would like to go you might name it now."

"Any time before the first of June will suit me — that will be too early for them to take their trip to the seashore; perhaps it is selfish in me to want to have it so soon."

"Certainly not; the bit of travel will prepare them for the heat and misery of the summer."

"I may be able to get some of my friends to go with me and help to amuse them."

"They do not need any help for that. Just to be let loose on a bit of sand by the seashore where they can make pies and wade in the water, is all they want; you would think they had spent their lives at such work they take to it so naturally."

"I am very glad we came; perhaps I can do a little more for your mission. Would part-worn clothing be of any service?"

"It certainly would be of great help. Nothing comes amiss here."

"May I come again and see my own children? I might bring them something," she hastened to add, as if by so doing she would ensure a welcome.

"You will not wish to come any more than we shall all want to see you; and henceforth you will be perfectly safe coming here day or night; the people will be true to you."

"Is it not safe now?" Miss Hunter asked, with some anxiety.

"Not particularly so after night. We have a rough crowd around the chapel. It is no use building them in respectable localities."

"We had better leave at once before the sun goes down," Miss Hunter said, with some apprehension in voice and face.

Angela cheerfully responded; and then they

shook hands with the superintendent, who gave them his card, when they found his name was Rev. Walter Sargeant.

Angela could hardly wait for the Sabbath to be gone to begin her work. She certainly thought a great deal about what she would probably get, even if she did not begin the work of collecting the garments. At least one dress apiece was a very moderate estimate from each young lady when they had been wearing out dresses all the year, and the most of them had so many changes. There were nearly a hundred young ladies in the institution, hence she felt there was a good prospect of that special mission being supplied with garments for this season at least. After school the following day she began her campaign, and succeeded beyond her most sanguine expectations. Miss Hunter accompanied her through the unsavory streets the following Sunday afternoon, when she went to give in the report of her successes.

"If we had a few helpers like you we would be a self-supporting mission in no time, and could revolutionize matters in this section of the city," Mr. Sargeant said admiringly. "I wish you could come some week day — on a Saturday, for instance — and see the good people at work on

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the articles you contribute. Kind ladies come here two afternoons in the week to work for the children. From what you tell me they will have no lack of materials for some time to come."

Angela looked eloquently at Miss Hunter.

"If I got a cabman to bring me here would you allow me to come?" she asked anxiously.

"I do not think we could permit you to come here alone, under any circumstances, but I will accompany you."

Angela waited until they were alone to thank her teacher.

The garments were made up into bundles and sent, nothing short of a furniture van being large enough, Angela assured them, to convey the dry goods to their destination. She and Miss Hunter went on the following Saturday, and found a party of ladies busy at work, some of them ladies of wealth, who had been connected with that mission for years, but not one of them had contributed to it, outside of their personal services, anything like the amount that Angela had done in less than a fortnight's time. She had a genius for giving herself to others, while she worked with the inspiration that only love can give.

CHAPTER XII.

BY THE SEA.

THE day appointed for their excursion to the seashore proved to be rainy. To say that a good many were disappointed would mildly express the grief experienced that day by scores of the children, but probably every rainy day brings disappointment to some one or other up and down in the earth. Of course the picnic had to be indefinitely postponed, since one is never sure when the weather will be in a sunny mood. To add to Angela's impatience, there was a good-sized box that Lindsay had sent for the children.

The fine day, however, came seasonably, even for the delicacies, and the start was made with great rejoicing. Several of Angela's school-mates accompanied her, and of course Miss Hunter was of the party, for she was getting very much interested in Angela's benevolent operations.

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soft May morning at the Central Station. Mothers and children were both there, the former nearly as eager for the day by the seashore as the children. The fare was so low even the poorest, by judicious economy, were able to get their ticket, and the fact that they were to have all they could eat free of charge was a matter of considerable moment. They knew it would be good food, and to have as much of that as they could consume in one day, in the empty state generally of their inner furnishings, was an experience not too frequent in their lives; while the ride through the fresh country air, and the sea breezes, would whet their appetites so that they could manage to pinch along on very little for several succeeding days.

Angela's spirits were subdued at sight of the pale, hungry faces of her fellow-travelers and the half-clad bodies of young and old. Not that any of them appeared in anything approaching the original South Sea costume, but their clothing for a gala day was so rent and patched, it was painfully suggestive as to what it might be on average occasions. There were little children in abundance, with sharp knees and elbows looking boldly out of unfortunate holes, their toes and heels presenting, in many cases, an equally

inquisitive appearance. They certainly did not need the new style of ventilating shoes for health or comfort either. Whatever was lacking in the garments of the excursionists, there was one thing they had brought with them in great abundance — a vast capacity for receiving whatever pleasure might fall to their lot.

Some of the babies were crying; they did not fully understand what was going on, while the unusual tossing they had received that morning jarred painfully on their tender nerves. The people around them fortunately were not such sybarites as to be affected by the shrill remonstrances of a company of infants; when the cars got well in motion, the little creatures were soon lulled into quiet, nestling contentedly in their mothers' arms, and gazing with round, serene eyes at their unaccustomed environments.

The end of their journey reached, the excursionists found themselves on a beautiful sandy beach which curved around in a semicircle for three or four miles, inclosed by two great headlands that, on their further sides, were skirted by perpendicular masses of rock, towering several hundred feet into the air. The beach and grasses of the land back from the shore mingled almost imperceptibly. The ground for some distance



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sloped so gradually you could scarcely notice any rise above the sea level for over a quarter of a mile, when suddenly it rose in mountainous masses extending in a circle for many miles. The sun was shining brightly across the waters, making a narrow path of illumination to the farther shore. The children, as they caught sight of its splendor, stretched out eager hands, as if to lay hold on the sparkling waves; what a picture it was to sink into their young hearts, to be treasured there lovingly as the fairest revelation of beauty's own self, until perhaps in other worlds another sea, and brighter, should stretch before them.

Angela was very silent that day, and also very observant. It was enough for her to watch the children at their play—digging in the sands, wading in the cold water, or picking buttercups and dandelions in the pastures, where the good-natured villagers permitted them to range at will. Many times over she reckoned up the outlay and receipts, and found the gain so large her heart was grieved that more money was not put to such splendid use.

She looked at her own becoming garniture of dress, and saw so much unnecessary expense—one garment alone costing more than this whole day's pleasuring would amount to. Her face was

always an excellent index to her thoughts, and as the day wore on, Miss Hunter saw the shadow resting so deeply on the usually sunny face, she sat down beside her on the smooth rock that the high tide had just left bare.

"You are not enjoying our day's merry-making, Angela; I can see that plainly in your face."

"I am, and I am not."

"That is an equivocal answer. Tell me, first, why you are not enjoying it."

"I cannot tell you how the children's happiness moves me. I can hardly keep back my tears when I look at them, while I cannot help thinking of the money I have been wasting on myself, and that so many thousands like myself are wasting — money that would make so many children happy."

"I do not think you can accuse yourself of wastefulness."

"I do waste it. Only a few days ago I took a frock to the dressmaker that cost me a lot of money, and the making of it alone will cost as much as this whole day's pleasuring, and I do not need the thing when it is done." She regarded the elegant garment now only with disgust.

"My dear girl, the dressmakers must live as well as the manufacturers and all other artisans."

"Certainly they must, and get rich also; but I have made up my mind they won't thrive so well because of me, henceforth. I never realized the value of money until to-day."

She sighed heavily. The world looked so vast and desolate, and its millions of the understratum so forsaken, while she was weak and her possibilities for helping them out of their degradation and misery limited.

"One should not think too much of others; we have our own life to live and make rich and glad."

"Miss Hunter, if I had been one of those wretched children, born into such a home as the worst of them have, would I not be thankful if some one with a richer, gladder life would forget themselves sometimes, and come to help me? I mean to do to them as I would like to be dealt by — some of them at least. I shall not return another year to school; it costs a great deal — I see that now. If Donald is displeased, and does not choose me for his friend, well, it will only be one more sacrifice." She spoke scarcely above her breath, and her face turned pale; as if the very thought of such a calamity was too bitter to think of.

"But, my dear child, you should not think of



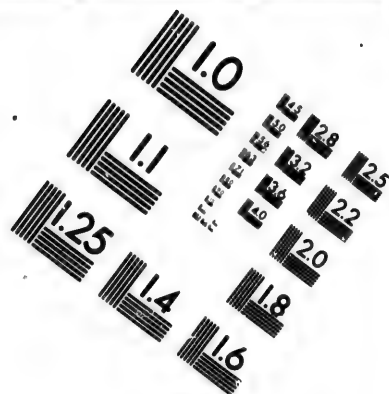
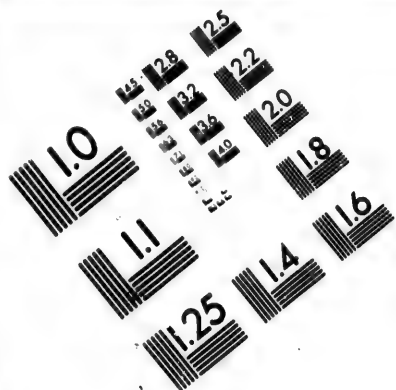


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leaving school. You must not carry self-sacrifice too far."

"It costs too much. I have reckoned up my expenses to-day. Papa told me once, when I was a very little girl, that I must always be gentlewoman enough to keep accurate accounts. I have neglected to take his advice, but to-day I found that my expenses the past year have amounted to something like six hundred dollars; another year I might spend more: one never can tell for certain what they will do; at least I cannot, for I am very impulsive."

"You should finish your education, at whatever cost," Miss Hunter urged.

"I have enough now to do me; besides, I am not clever, and never shall be, no matter how I may try. I shall read more and study less. The Lord Jesus did not choose his friends among the learned only. I want to be the friend of God; that must satisfy me." She arose abruptly. "Let us never talk on this subject again. I have fought a battle to-day; maybe the scars will always show on my soul, but one can forget scars, and fresh wounds, too, if they have something else to think of."

"You are mistaken, Angela, about your ability for scholarship. It is the opinion of your teachers

that, as your mind develops, it will be proved that you have unusual gifts; some minds mature slowly, and yours is of that type, we believe."

"Please do not let us talk any more. I would rather think that God had not furnished me very richly with gifts save those of wealth and helpfulness. I am glad he gave me these." Her eyes had a troubled expression, but about the sweet, firm mouth was the look of a set purpose.

"Shall we go and watch the children at their play? I saw the little midgets making pies and cakes awhile ago; it made me laugh and cry both, to see how prodigal they were of plums. They never had such abundance of anything before save misery, as they had of sand and stones out of which to compound their make believes."

"You must not take things so much to heart; you will be worn out at thirty, if life is so intense with you at seventeen."

"Hearts are made of tougher stuff than to wear out at sight of other people's misery."

They went from group to group in silence. Little barefooted things were wading in the cold salt water, their shoes and stockings scattered around carelessly. Of course there was scrambling, and some fighting when they performed their toilet finally, for the shoes and stockings

did not always find their way to the same feet; but the difference in value was so slight it did not much matter how they were disposed among the youthful owners.

What she saw and heard that day haunted Angela for long afterward, but her resolution continued fixed in the matter of further schooling for herself. Her announcement that she was not coming back another year met with general consternation, but the reason she honestly gave for this determination, although far from satisfactory to most of them, was generally respected. There was something so genuine about her convictions, and the way she expressed them, her schoolmates could not help acknowledging that she had some peculiarities not easy to define, but which in theory were very beautiful, although not convenient to imitate. Some of them resolved to imitate to some extent the example she set, hence, unknown to herself, it was not the wretchedly poor alone that she helped, but others who, but for her, might never have experienced the luxury of being taken out of self, and taught that the crown of being is in doing, not receiving good.

CHAPTER XIII.

MARK AND LUCY.

ANGELA took her boy and girl home with her. She knew that Lindsay would be so glad to see her, for a little while at least, she would not give way to reproaches, and before she reached that stage Angela trusted that by a judicious explanation of the case she could make her so far resigned to the inevitable as to treat the children civilly. She was also anxious to get them away from the dreadful influences surrounding them, and under her own roof where the half-starved creatures might improve in soul and body. The ladies at the mission had fitted them up quite decently, and to the children themselves the transformation seemed hardly short of miraculous, although every garment given had served some other human being before it came to them, and in the matter of shoes especially were not a perfect fit since these were a size or two

larger than the feet they were to adorn, but this was matter of perfect indifference to the wearers, since to have shoes of any size, in such excellent preservation, and with that shining coat of blacking, was a new experience.

They were to meet her at the station, accompanied by Mr. Sargeant, who would commit them to her care. It must be confessed that as the hour drew near Angela dreaded more and more the responsibility she had assumed, wishing most heartily that she could feel it compatible with duty to give of her means, without having actually to give herself to the work, but when she saw the two eager faces watching for her that morning, when she reached the station accompanied by a crowd of students, it seemed for the moment really a joy to be taking the poor starved things to the lap of plenty.

"They will be just like dolls for you," a schoolmate whispered. "I almost wish I was taking a couple myself."

Angela crossed over to where they were standing with Mr. Sargeant.

"Are you glad to be going with me?" she asked, after she had spoken with their companion.

"You may bet your boots on it, that we are," the boy promptly responded.

"Oh! does he talk so dreadfully as that all the time?" she asked with some alarm.

"He meant no harm; it is the style he is accustomed to," was the reply.

"I'll talk any way you want me to, ma'am, if you'll jest give me the wink how it's to be done," the boy said in all seriousness.

"Thank you. Now I do not know what name to call you by."

"My name is Mark, and hers is Lucy."

"Mark and Lucy; I think I shall like those names very well."

"Yes'm; they do grand to call us by. You see all you've got to do if you want either of us is to holler Mark, or Lucy, and we'll be there afore you'd say Jack Robinson."

"That will be very convenient," Angela said politely, but at the same time not looking specially delighted over his assurance of being always on hand.

Mark was a genuine street Arab, and an adept in the training of the streets. He could read faces well, for they were what he had studied best, and he saw very quickly that Angela did not look as happy as when she came a few minutes before. He wondered if he could have caused it by his words; if so he resolved to learn to talk like her,

and then she could not fail to be satisfied with his mode of expressing himself. His great ambition now was to please her. If she could have looked into the darkened heart of the lad she would have felt less troubled; could have known the eager thoughts and hopes that were fermenting there. She took them into the car. The handsome upholstery and easy-chairs were an astonishment to him; as he sank into a luxurious seat he exclaimed audibly, "Golly! ain't this a stunner of a place?" and then recollecting himself subsided directly into abashed and blushing silence.

Angela heard the words, and saw also the look of shame that spread over his face, and because of this, felt consoled. Mark kept very quiet, only his eyes, by their restless glances, showing how busy and alert his thoughts were. When dinner time came, Angela felt so sorry for the poor hungry things who, no doubt, had breakfasted on next to nothing, that, in spite of her anxiety as to their table deportment, she took them to dinner. Mark looked around upon the well-appointed table in a bewildered way. How he was to acquit himself creditably among those implements for getting food into the mouth was a question that puzzled him more than the picking up of the

scanty bite that sufficed to keep starvation away from him and Lucy. It was so long since he had used a knife and fork, at least any knife save his jack-knife, he was certain he could not reflect credit on his new friend if he attempted to use them. She was sitting beside him serenely unconscious of the perplexing question the use of those common adjuncts to the dinner table were to him, when a gentle whisper drew her attention.

"Would you mind telling them to let us have some spoon vittels? blest if I hain't forgot how to use these things," pointing to the knife and fork at his side.

When the waiter brought her orders for the three of them Angela saw Mark cast a hungry glance at the well-filled dishes—a genuine Thanksgiving dinner such as he had seen pictured in the illustrated papers. "Try to eat with them; you can watch me," she whispered encouragingly.

Mark was very hungry, now that he smelt the food and saw it so provokingly within his reach, and the temptation was too strong for his better judgment. He took up the knife and fork and began operations, eating at first in a very careful way, his eyes divided between Angela's deft use of those troublesome instruments and the clumsy

way they had of slipping out of his fingers, but after awhile he got so interested in his dinner, for it tasted so very good, he forgot to pay attention to anything else and, before he knew what he was doing, the knife and fork had been dropped, and he was enjoying his dinner to the fullest possible extent.

"O, Mark! what are you doing?" Angela's voice expressed both disgust and amazement.

"Blest if I didn't forget all about them things," he said, wiping his greasy fingers with his tongue, and picking up the discarded implements.

His enjoyment of the dinner was marred for that day, after he had stolen a hasty glance into Angela's flushed and mortified face, for other eyes than hers had noticed the way Mark disposed of his viands, and a general smile was wreathing the lips of the people around them.

They reached the Pines late in the evening. Wardell had come to the train to meet them. Mark's eyes shone with excitement as he sat on the front seat and saw how skillfully the driver controlled the shining black horses. It was the first really comfortable ride he had ever enjoyed, such luxuries hitherto having been taken on the sly, or else in some lumbering van, when only for the name of it, walking would have been preferable.

Mark and Lucy seemed like children in a dream, especially when morning came. The refreshing rest of the night, the pretty bedrooms and clean soft beds, the like of which their wildest fancies could not have pictured, and then to add to the wonderland of surprises, the breakfast—genuine cream on their oatmeal and in their coffee, with toast saturated with butter that had not the slightest tendency to make the tongue tingle, such as their limited acquaintance with butter had the unfortunate habit of doing, and then such eggs, with a flavor that was astonishing. Indeed Mark remarked sedately that he did not know there was such a difference in eggs. Afterward, when he saw the hens who had manufactured those extraordinary delicacies, and learned that a fairly industrious individual among them could produce one every day, with now and then a holiday to refresh herself, he did not know whether to be most astonished at their industry or the excellence of the article they produced, and settled the question at last satisfactorily to his own mind by concluding that these hens at the Pines were a particularly honest and dainty set of fowls, different altogether from the kind who supplied city markets.

They went with Angela, after the dew was dry

on the shrubs and grass, to the pastures and made acquaintance with the cows — gentle, affectionate creatures who stood with meek satisfaction to have their heads rubbed, and even let Mark take a strain of milk from them — the first time in his life that he rightly understood where milk came from. They watched the well-fed, frolicsome calves — fawn-like young creatures who looked as curiously at the boy and girl as the latter did at them. There were horses and colts and sheep, and all the feathered tribes to see, last of all the fruit and flowers. Nothing was at its perfection, and Mark could scarcely be made to understand that apples and apricots, pears and plums would in a short time be hanging within his reach from those wooden stems. When every thing had been seen, even to the great, dusky barns where the animals and their food would be stored when the snows lay deep on the land, Mark asked after a thoughtful silence, "Would it cost you a great lot of money to keep me and Lucy here always?"

"Would you like to stay?"

"In course we would, and we'd be just as good as we knew how. I'd never eat with my fingers, nor put my fork in my mouth — or which is it I mustn't lick? I can't seem to remember."

"Your knife should never, under any circumstances, go into your mouth."

"I guess I'll rec'lect now; and if you'll let us stay, I'll talk the best I know how; never swear, or say golly, but just talk for all the world as you do, and so'll Lucy."

"Will you go to school and study, helping Mr. Wardell night and morning?"

"In course; we'll do anything you want us. Say, does it cost you much? We won't always expect such vittels as you give us this morning; we ain't used to much — are we, Lucy? I could eat a lot less than I've done since I come here. We never et as much in the same time, I guess, only the day of the picnic. My! but wasn't that jolly!"

The lad could never mention that day without giving forcible expression to his feelings. Angela was silently wiping her eyes. Mark's appeal had touched her heart.

"Well, there, we won't say any more about it, and please don't cry. I'm sorry I was so greedy; and it's awful good of you to let us make you a visit. When I'm a man and rich I'll have a big house and a horse, and I'll ask you to come and see me."

"Mark dear, I am going to keep you here

until you are a man, and I shall educate you, too."

The first thing Angela knew Mark was walking beside her, head downwards, and using his hands as a means of locomotion. He righted himself presently, looking very flushed and considerably ashamed.

"I jest forgot; I was so glad I had to do something. You won't be mad with me, will you?"

"Certainly not; the very best boys do that sometimes."

Angela remembered what skill Donald had in such gymnastics, and anything he did any lad might safely imitate.

"I never know'd folks could be as happy as me and Lucy is this morning. Say, couldn't I go to work now? I've always been used to furraging up our dinners before we et it, besides I'd like to pay you back when you're so good to us."

"You can come upstairs to my schoolroom, and I will give you a lesson. You must study every day, and after holidays you shall go to school."

"That won't be helping you any."

"Yes, it will; I want you to become a noble

man. To accomplish this you must work very hard."

"I'll do what I can."

Angela, before many days, was astonished at the way he dropped his uncouth forms of expression. She would have been still more surprised had she known the strict watch he kept over his speech. As for Lucy, she scarcely spoke at all except to answer a question; but when she and her brother were alone her tongue was as limber as his.

They followed Angela upstairs that morning somewhat regretfully; there was so much to see outdoors, such wonders of beauty in animal and vegetable form which they wanted to get better acquainted with, they found it hard to leave, but if Miss Angela was anxious to have them in the house, why, in the house they would cheerfully go.

As the examination into their stores of knowledge proceeded, Angela found that Mark had some slight knowledge of letters, although he did not know all the alphabet; but he could tell on the instant the names of any of the newspapers he was in the habit of selling. Their editors-in-chief could not read off the names of their respective newspapers more readily than he. He could reckon money or count marbles as quickly

as any lad among his associates, but when set down to a sum in addition it was a profound mystery to him. Lucy was even farther behind with her studies. Angela kept them for an hour, and then gave each of them a short lesson to study for the afternoon's recitation. She allowed them to take their books out in the gardens. Mark came in with his perfectly learned, but Lucy was duller, and the attraction of the new world about them was so strong, making her forget lessons and everything as she strayed through the meadows and gardens.

As the summer wore on she took more interest in her lessons, and when the school opened, after holidays, they were able to present themselves much more respectably than might have been expected. Mark could read quite easily in the Testament, he had mastered the multiplication table, and knew enough of the geography of his own whereabouts to pass muster decently in that branch of knowledge. But in those other sciences dear to a boy's heart he had made astonishing progress. He could drive the working teams of horses nearly as well as Wardell, build a load of hay on the most approved principles as taught by the haymakers, rake and toss the hay and work with the golden grain as well as any

country boy to the manner born; he could climb the trees almost as quickly as the squirrels, pick strawberries, milk the cows, and discover the whereabouts of the nests some of the more secretive hens had stolen in the dusky barns, better than the housemaid herself.

Lindsay was superintending Lucy's practical education, and, strange to say, indulged in very few complaints against the child. She and Mark were as opposite in disposition as if they had been children of different nationalities instead of the same parents. He was open-hearted, impetuous, quick to commit a fault, and equally ready to acknowledge and bewail it, and as generous as Angela herself; Lucy never revealed the possession of a heart. She was prim in her ways, and went about in such an humble, dreamy fashion one sometimes wondered if she were a child at all. Angela cared very little for Lucy, but her ways suited Lindsay, since she found her easy to mould into a desired pattern.

At school Mark took readily to his books, and was able to make his way either with fist or brain, with the best of them. Some of his school fellows made sport of him, for his peculiarities of speech still clung to him, and village gossip had become possessed of the fact that Angela Mar-

lowe's protégés were the refuse of the street; owned by no one, and created, it was supposed, something after the manner that Topsy declared she had her beginnings. The respectable people of Longhurst resented having such waifs and strays foisted upon their children as daily associates. Mark was too manly to trouble Angela with the unpleasantnesses he met with, but he sometimes found it difficult to keep within the bounds of truth and satisfactorily explain the contusions and discolorations that frequently disfigured his face. When, however, she did at last discover their cause, she was considerably distressed. She received a highly colored version of it, and not at all in Mark's favor.

She had been making a round of calls in Longhurst, and at several houses complaints had been made of the vigorous and skillful way her boy could use his hands. Some of those elect ladies expressed themselves forcibly on the risk she ran in introducing such characters into the place. Lawyer Moxton's wife even went so far as to hint that she laid herself open to possible legal complications in the matter. Her own first-born was at the time suffering from the effects of a judicious and well-applied whipping administered by Mark; a form of discipline he had suffered a

lack of under the parental roof. Angela was grieved, but she was naturally too just to condemn the boy unheard.

"I will find out, by some means, the rights of the case, and if Mark is to blame I will remove him from the school; if not, he shall have the privilege of the best teachers in town, no matter who objects."

She spoke with determination, for her temper was roused against the pride and selfishness of these mothers whose charities extended no further than their own firesides. Mrs. Moxton at once changed the conversation. She was loath to forfeit Angela's friendship — an unwillingness that she shared in common with her townswomen.

When she reached home Angela called Mark to the schoolroom, determined to find out the truth of the matter. He looked troubled when she told him what she had heard, and demanded an explanation of his conduct.

"I want you to tell me nothing but the truth; try to fancy that you are describing it as if you were a mere spectator, and not one of the principal actors in the matter," she said to him very seriously in closing.

He sat for some time, apparently very busy thinking. At last he asked, "If you find I

have been a very wicked boy, will you send me and Lucy away?"

"No, I shall not do that; but I won't love you."

"Do you love me now?" the boy asked eagerly, his eyes kindling, and his face all alight with expectation.

"Why, yes, Mark, I have got to love you very dearly," replied Angela. "I believe in my heart I sometimes call you my little brother."

In an instant his arms were around her neck, his face buried in her bosom, and his whole frame convulsed with emotion. It was the first time he had ever made any specially affectionate demonstration, and Angela had never dreamed of the passionate devotion that dwelt in his boyish heart. She clasped her arms about him and kissed the quivering lips.

"Now tell me all about it, dear; just as if I were your own mother."

"I did not mean to fight, or do anything I wouldn't be willing you should know; but they made me so angry; they called me names — beggar, wharf rat, and other things I wouldn't speak of to you. And they always struck me first. But I won't fight any more if you say so."

"I would rather, dear Mark, that you would

be patient with them, for the sake of our Lord Jesus, than for my sake. I could not be there to help you when they were most provoking, but he is always near you; always able and willing to help you."

"I never seem to feel Him near," Mark said doubtfully.

"Perhaps you do not ask Him to be near you."

"I can say every word of the prayers you had me learn when I came here, and I always say them night and morning — only when I forget," he added honestly.

"I want you now to make your own prayers; just tell the Lord all about your difficulties, and how hard it is to be patient, and ask him to give you strength to do what is right."

"Do you pray that way to God every day?"

"Yes, dear; and some days many times."

"That is the reason you are so different from everybody else. Do you suppose it would make me like you if I prayed that way?"

"It would make you like Christ, and that would be far better."

"I wouldn't ask for anything better than to be like you."

"You will try now to be patient and not to fight any more?"

"I will never strike another blow on anybody. I will show them in another way that I am not a wharf rat."

Mark spoke with quiet determination, but without any trace of boastfulness.

"I will tell you now, Mark, what I did not mean you should know for some years, but the knowledge of it may be the means of stimulating you to more earnest effort. If you prove to us that you possess the material of a good student, I am going to give you as good an education as any boy can have. If you do your share I will do mine."

"O, Miss Angela! what makes you do that?" His face was quivering with emotion, and his voice was unsteady.

"Well, one reason is because I like you, and I want to see you become a noble, helpful man; the good you may do will seem as if I too had a share in it — as if we were partners. I want to do all the good I can in my brief passage through this world; be a worker with the Lord Jesus, as well as trying to be like him."

"I am glad you talked to me to-day. I will be stronger after this."

"What do you mean by that, Mark?"

"I won't fight so easy, or swear at them — I

used to swear when they made me very mad," he said, looking into her face with a brave light in his eyes, as if he was determined to make full confession.

"And all the time I was learning to love you so well. O, Mark! how hard it is for us to be good in this world. You must not think because you feel happy with me here, that the victory is won. Our life through is one continued warfare, I believe."

"Won't it be natural for me to be good when I am a man — come as easy as doing the other way now?"

"Very strong Christians may find it so, but I think the very best have to fight the evil; even Christ had the temptation of Satan after he proclaimed himself God."

Mark looked puzzled, and somewhat discouraged. It seemed such a long, long time until he was an old man, when life's temptations would be laid down along with all its other belongings.

Angela felt convinced that her conversation that day would bear fruit in his life, he seemed so impressed and also anxious to do what was right.

CHAPTER XIV.

RESCUED FROM THE SLUMS.

ANOTHER year slipped quickly away. Mark had his trials at school, but no further complaints were received either from him or his schoolfellows. Whatever the provocation, he never broke his promise, either about fighting or swearing, and this for a street Arab was certainly remarkable. He liked to come home from school at night and look Angela honestly in the face, knowing that his promise had been kept. After awhile he found it less difficult to keep that promise; even the most disagreeable people find it tiresome to quarrel alone, and the stimulus of calling names, and using abusive language generally becomes monotonous when received silently.

Angela was becoming so interested in Mark's welfare that she was forgetting the scores of waifs left at the Markam Street Mission, many of them in just as miserable condition as his had

been. As the spring days wore into summer, she was often reminded of the wilted children drooping amid the fetid atmosphere of the crowded courts, where children seemed to swarm most abundantly. Mark used to talk of his old companions, speculating on the way they were getting on, and wondering what they would say if they could see how he and Lucy had grown. Often he would express the wish that they could be at the Pines for awhile, too, in order that they might undergo a similar transformation.

"You see there is so much room here, and such quantities of everything," he would say apologetically.

"But it is so far to bring them," Angela responded one day to his oft-repeated remark.

"They could come for nothing, maybe. I guess the cars don't charge for the Fresh Air children."

"We will think about it. If I should go for some, how many would you like me to bring home?"

"All that you could afford to have. You can't imagine what a change it would be for them, and how they will think of it all the rest of the year. I know how it was with the picnic."

When they came to talk the matter over in the

family, it was found that Lucy was as strongly opposed to such an invasion of young folk as Mark was in favor of it; a fact that did not raise her in Angela's estimation. The more she thought the matter over the more convinced was she that it was her duty to follow Mark's suggestion.

Donald was expected home shortly — the first visit he had made his parents in three years, and Angela naturally was anxious to be at home when he came. He was to graduate at the end of that school year, and at the end of a brief holiday he was going on an extended tour with the same teacher he had gone with the preceding years. Lindsay sighed lugubriously when Angela announced her errand to the city, but she had too loyal ideas of the rights of a mistress to remonstrate with her on her erratic course. Angela was a full-grown young lady now, and should insist on her rights as the mistress of such a handsome establishment, but she was so provokingly indifferent about those rights Lindsay used to get sadly out of patience with her.

Angela concluded it was time those children had another voyage to the seaside, so she provided herself with a generous supply of money, in order to do all that might be in her heart.

Mr. Sargeant was overjoyed to see her. He entered heartily into her plans, and Angela began to look upon him as a most delightful fellow worker.

They had their excursion to the small seaside village. The children were permitted to make choice of several different places, but without a dissenting voice they chose the one they had visited before. They knew how charming that spot was, and could not think the broad earth contained a better.

To some of them Angela, with her pure, high-bred face and dainty costume, seemed like the angels they sang about. The girls began to think it would well repay them the pain of dying if the passage through the mysterious valley would transform them into such gracious and beautiful visions of womanhood. To have her address them was itself an inspiration, for she talked so gently, with such tenderness too in face and voice, which was a new experience to them in their intercourse with those above them.

In some dim way it brought to mind the story of the Good Shepherd who used to walk among poor, sinful men and women, making Himself one with the penniless and sorrowful. Other ladies would talk to them in a patronizing, and

also reproachful manner, as if for some unexplained reason they were themselves to blame for their unhappy condition. Very often it was more of a trial than comfort, coming in contact with these benevolent sisters who worked for them mainly from a sense of duty.

The picnic passed off successfully, and Angela kept herself on the alert to make the choice of children to take back for a visit to the Pines — a task she found difficult to accomplish; there were so many hungry faces and half-clad bodies through which grim want peeped at her, that to decide which six appealed most strongly for help was an impossibility.

She confided her perplexity to Mr. Sargeant. He looked surprised when she told him what she wanted, and confided how hard she found it to choose when the choice was so extensive.

"You want the most desperate cases," he said thoughtfully. "If I were to describe the condition of some scores of children who attend our services, you would find it still harder to decide which was worst, but I think we can get a half-dozen cases a little more desperate than the rest."

An hour or two later he drew her to one side and explained that he had made the selection, subject, of course, to her approval.

"They are a melancholy-looking lot, but the wonder is that their heads are above ground at all; they must have come from a tough-fibered race, or the hunger and ill-usage they have endured would have finished them long ago."

"Are they all of one family?"

"No, indeed; the trouble in some cases would be to find any family connection for them. Two of them are kept by an old man; they live in a single room, on the top floor of a six-storied tenement. They call him uncle, but it is doubtful what relation they bear to him. They may possibly be his own children; one never can tell about these wretched creatures. He is anxious to get rid of them, and treats them at times very cruelly. Another, a girl of ten, lives with an old hag in a cellar. She, too, is cruel to the child. We sometimes see marks of brutal treatment on her gaunt body. She does not look to be more than six years old, and is nothing but skin and bones—and no wonder; she is always half-starved. If you could get a home for her somewhere in the country, it would be a mercy—or indeed for any one of them. Two of the others are slightly better off. They live with their father, who is an easy-going, good-natured creature, but too idle and shiftless to earn more than

the rent of the single room they occupy, and the merest bite of food, beside his own drink — for that he will have. They are what is called professional beggars. Another lives with her mother, a decent woman who does slop sewing, as it is called. She is a consumptive, but with a little help manages to keep soul and body together, after a fashion. I brought a seventh, thinking you might want to take some one in the place of little Annie Murphy — she is such a desperate-looking child. The last one is a lad of more than average ability. He will be one thing or another to a marked degree; not a milk sop, I assure you. If he could be surrounded with right influences I believe he might make a noble man; if not he will join the ranks of our dangerous classes."

"I think you have made a very judicious selection."

"You may not think so when you see them; but if they are too hard a crowd you can choose others. I merely told them to come here, but did not explain for what purpose I wanted them."

They had only a few steps further to go when the list was concluded, or rather the description of them, and Angela stood face to face with the crowd who were to be her guests for a couple of

months at least. She had hastily decided when she took in the sorry-looking party that it would take at least two months of dieting to fill out those wrinkles, for Mr. Sargeant's description of their desperate condition had been, if anything, underdrawn. Grim want stared at her through the white, pinched faces, the shriveled limbs and tattered garments of the seven waifs who looked into her face with a mixture of curiosity and admiration.

"I will take these."

"All of them?" Mr. Sargeant asked quickly.

"Yes; they all look as if they needed a change; but we must get something better for them to wear. I will buy the material, and perhaps some of your helpers will assist me to make them some garments."

"We will attend to that part of the work very thankfully. You must not think because these look so bare that we needlessly neglect them. If we began to clothe the children during the warm weather, the parents, for the most part, would leave everything for us to do, and then find fault at the quality of clothing supplied."

Angela was looking too intently at the children to pay much heed to what her companion was saying.

"Should you like to come home with me to the country for a few weeks?" she asked. "You shall have plenty of good food and green fields to play in."

"Yes, mum; we would," some of them found voice to reply. The others nodded their heads, but their faces expressed the satisfaction they could not frame into words. The seventh one, who answered to the name of Patrick Cauty, looked more rejoiced than any of them, perhaps because his face was more mobile and could better index the sentiment of his heart. Angela was particularly taken with him from the first.

"We shall have you some new clothes in a few days; as soon as they are completed we will go to the country. Mr. Sargeant will remember your names, and see that none of you will be left out. You can go now and play with the others."

Angela turned and walked away with Mr. Sargeant, the prospect of having those pinched faces about her for several weeks already making her feel uncomfortable, but if she could have realized the strange, and before unknown thrill of joy that she had set pulsating in those youthful breasts, her own heart would have been lighter.

The band of workers who had adopted this

special mission as their sphere of benevolent labor, entered so heartily into getting the children ready for the journey, that before a week had elapsed, every boy and girl was fitted out with a new suit of clothes. Angela was glad to see the work go on so swiftly. As she saw more of her band of seven who haunted the mission chapel continually, ostensibly to be on hand if their garments needed fitting, but really to watch the fascinating work going on, she felt eager to get them away where fresh air and wholesome food abounded, to see if it would be possible to get those sharp bones hidden, and that famished look taken from the wan faces.

The morning came at last when they were to leave. The rain was falling in torrents, and the streets standing in filthy puddles as she drove to the station. She was half-afraid they would not come, and most heartily wished she had provided for this contingency by ordering a coach for them, but when she got there Mr. Sargeant was standing near the entrance waiting for her, while marshaled behind him, were seven dripping figures, the hearts of the little girls nearly broken because of the limp appearance of all their bravery of attire. It was hard, the very first hats they ever possessed with new ribbons and artificial flowers,

to be so soon wilted by the rain. The boys took their wetting more philosophically.

As they stood in the chapel that morning, after they had each one indulged in a thorough bath, their old clothes all discarded and everything new and clean put on, they had looked so very fine in their own and one another's eyes, and now they stood there a limp, melancholy group, the younger ones ready to break into weeping at the slightest provocation. But Angela looked so glad, and smiled on them so cheerfully they forgot that the sun was not shining, and their little bodies as wet as they well could be.

Mr. Sargeant looked as if he would have given a good deal for the privilege of accompanying them. Two other young men who stood near at hand watched the ill-assorted group with amused and curious faces. One of them looked as if he thought the picture a very fair one — the refined girl in her pretty traveling dress, surrounded by the limp figures who regarded her with the hungry glances of love one so seldom sees in any face, save in some noble specimen of the canine race. The other young man, who was something of an exquisite, and had the vacant look that accompanies that unfortunate, and very useless class of individuals wore just now a more decided expres-

sion on his dull features than usual, disgust and admiration being pretty evenly divided.

Angela did not observe either of them. She was too much interested in her charge to see the many curious glances bent upon her, for there was probably not a single pair of eyes but took in the group, of which she was the central figure. People made way for her at the ticket office, and booths where refreshments were supplied to travelers, while the clerks flew around with even more than their accustomed alacrity to fill her large orders. How those fourteen eyes watched the cakes and sandwiches, oranges, apples, confectionery, and all sorts of good things exhibited at such places as they went into the bags, and were entrusted to their own hands to carry, for no two hands could possibly hold a quarter of the supplies she was laying in.

Their breakfast, always somewhat limited, both in quantity and variety, had lacked the customary sauce of hunger that morning, for the excitement and anxiety lest they might not be on time had made them so eager to start, they scarcely stopped to swallow so much as a cold potato or crust. But now with the gratifying prospect of having something good to eat, they realized very keenly their empty condition.

Angela, too, was so beautifully unconscious how charmingly she looked among her waifs, and so interested in satisfying their wants that she forgot there was any one save herself, the children, and the clerks, who seemed to be created for the express purpose of aiding in her benevolent enterprises.

Anxiety to secure plenty of room in the car made her forget that Mr. Sargeant was still hovering near, waiting for his share of solacement, and which he craved more intensely than the hungriest child in the lot. He overtook her before she entered the car. The two young men who followed them were not particularly sympathetic as they noticed the preoccupied air with which she bestowed her hand and said her adieus, although her eyes did light up cordially as she thanked him for the trouble he had taken in bringing the children through the storm. She was, fortunately, not conscious of the keen heart-ache he experienced as he turned away to go back to the dregs of humanity, among whom his lot was cast.

Angela got her children bestowed as comfortably as possible, although she was considerably troubled about their damp condition; but they unanimously assured her they did not mind that,

only so far as their clothes were concerned. Very soon there was a continual buzz of conversation from their vicinity, and a very cheerful sound it was, for they were enjoying the contents of those paper bags. Of course Angela wisely regulated the quantity, else they might soon have been sick; but at her suggestion they ate leisurely, and as the supply was abundant, and the demand brisk, they scarcely stopped eating until Longhurst station was reached.

When they halted for dinner Angela got them a supply of hot coffee, but she wisely determined not to exhibit her young savages at the dinner table. She had not forgotten Mark's exploits, the year before, with the unaccustomed accessories of a dinner table. Possibly these children would acquit themselves no better than he.

When they were leaving the station that morning, and Angela was still regarding her charge with a very satisfied and quite maternal countenance, the vacant seat at her side was taken. She glanced around at the new-comer, and was surprised, and not greatly pleased to find she was likely to have Lewis Moxton for a traveling companion. He regarded her with bold, admiring eyes, at the same time giving expression to his evident satisfaction at meeting her thus un-

expectedly. They had scarcely concluded their greetings when he asked rather impatiently what she was going to do with that hungry-looking squab of children.

"I am taking them home with me."

She spoke with a good deal of dignity. The children were already beginning to assume a very pleasing appearance in her eyes.

"What in the world are you taking them to the Pines for? You do not need all of them for servants, surely?"

"No, indeed; they are going to be my guests for a couple of months. If we get on harmoniously, perhaps for a longer period. They have no special business demanding their presence in the city."

Angela never attempted putting on airs on her own behalf; when she did for her city friends it was a ludicrous failure, as in the present instance. Lewis's laugh grated very harshly on her ears as he said contemptuously:

"Well, no, I should say that neither they nor their ancestors knew much about business."

"Oh! I dare say I should not get along any better than they have done if I had only had their chance, probably not so well, as I never could muster courage to sell a newspaper, and I

would be too proud to black people's shoes. These children have followed those trades principally. Really, I have a great respect for them; some of them have not only earned their own living, but contributed to the support of others, so Mr. Sargeant told me; that is a great deal more than either of us have ever done. I don't suppose now that either of us ever really earned a dollar in our lives."

She bestowed a very proud look on the open-mouthed youths, who had ceased eating long enough to hear the recount of their own excellence.

Lewis's face wore an expression of disgust, which he dare not express otherwise. To think of putting him on a lower par than that desperate-looking crowd was more than he would have taken from a youth of his own sex, and of less physical caliber. He did not deign a reply, and the worst of it was Angela did not look as if one could be given.

After quite a prolonged silence he changed the conversation.

"Did you know that Donald Wardell was in this car?"

Angela's face turned pale, and then grew rosy again.

"No, indeed; is he really in this car with us?"

"Yes; a few seats back."

Angela turned her head, but there was no one in sight answering to the lad she had not seen for three years.

"Do you see that fellow with the book in his hand — the one with the brown curly hair, and in his bare head?"

"How he has changed! I should never have known him."

She spoke wistfully. The change in his appearance was certainly for the better, but still she recognized it was the same face when she began to look more closely, only grown manly — a strong, intense face, with a power not often seen in one so young. The firm, handsome mouth seemed capable of uttering the noblest thoughts, but looked as if no impure or ignoble word could pass from its keeping; the eyes were fixed on the book. She could not tell what varying expressions they could hold, but the broad forehead about which the brown hair was curling as of old, seemed capable of holding many secrets of knowledge, of originating splendid thoughts that might enrich generations yet to come. She was only a few seconds looking at him, but her gaze was searching, and if she was not a bright student of books she was clever at reading human

faces. The sigh that escaped her lips unconsciously was not unnoticed by her companion, who was watching her closely.

"Do you think him very good looking?"

"He looks very good."

"Oh! I expect he is as much of a prig as ever — hardly knows whether he is alive or not, and satisfied so long as he has a book in his hand."

"He has made better use of books than most of us I should judge, by the reports I have read of his graduating honors. You saw the very flattering mention made of him in the papers, I presume?"

"Yes; I saw them," he said moodily.

"It did not surprise me at all that he gained such triumphs. I expect he will be one of the great men of our country some day."

"But he will always be the son of your servant, no matter what he becomes," Lewis said with weak spite.

"What difference will that make? only very silly people are concerned about the family connections of celebrated men. I believe most folk who have faculty enough to appreciate them are so thankful to get them they don't much mind how they were born," Angela said loftily.

"You are too ignorant to judge anything about

it. I can tell you people do think a great deal more about your family connections and position than anything else — only the depth of your pocket ; that is a consideration," he said rather insultingly.

"It must be a very unfortunate thing for you Longhurst people that such is the case. Lindsay says every one there is of commonplace origin. They cannot trace back their ancestry to their great-grandparents, any way, without coming in contact with peasants. And even if they were first-class families they would need to be ashamed of their descendants, and that is worse than the other ; it is what I am myself, and not what some old ancestor gone to dust might have been that makes me noble or despicable. I have no patience with such things. Why, Lindsay don't reckon our Alderneys or Jerseys by their ancestors, but by their own individual qualities as milkers and butter makers — and it is just the same thing."

She ended her sentence triumphantly, but looking into Lewis's angry and discomfited face her blaze of righteous wrath died out directly.

"I believe I have said some unkind things, Lewis ; I am very sorry that you provoked them."

"I should say they were unkind, and very

rude, too; but since you are sorry I won't remember them against you," he said magnanimously.

"I am afraid they were not what a Christian should say; that is the worst of all. Sometimes I think I shall never be a real Christian — one of the beautiful and patient kind."

She spoke sorrowfully, and with such deep humility any one possessed of a nature not utterly coarse would have been touched by her confession.

"I don't think your Christianity will hurt you; for one thing, you are too hard on society people."

"I like nice, cultured society people — not the ones who only think about what they shall eat and wear, and who they will associate with. One never gets a single noble thought from such people."

"Noble thoughts don't help people along much in this world — a bookful of them wouldn't get you a dinner."

Lewis's ideas were too ignoble to listen to, and Angela merely responded to his remarks after that with briefest possible replies. His presence had banished all the happy thoughts that had been making the leaden skies, with their copious outpouring of water, almost as cheerful as sunny skies were on average occasions. He left her

presently, saying he wished to see a friend in the smoking car, but he would be back shortly, asking her to retain the seat for him. She did not promise, but he could not believe any sensible girl would prefer Donald Wardell for a traveling companion, and Angela was sensible enough, only a little democratic and utopian in her views. He did not feel any uneasiness of conscience either at calling a cigar his friend. He certainly felt the need of its solacement to regain his mental balance after Angela's unexpected lecture.

She breathed a sigh of relief at his departure, hoping his friend might prove so attractive he would not leave him. She cast a timid backward glance at Donald, and saw that his book was closed, while he seemed to be very intently regarding that portion of space which she occupied. When he caught her eyes his own lighted up suddenly. Their expression was unchanged, save that she fancied there were deeper meanings in their calm depths, as if they reflected a mind that had penetrated many subtle mysteries. She fell to studying them intently. She remembered herself directly, and with her old, sunny smile, bowed graciously. He scarcely waited to respond to her salutation, but came directly to her.

"How much you have changed, Angela! I

certainly did not expect to find you a young lady grown. But I should have known you even without this collection of young folk—they would have revealed your identity if my memory had been treacherous."

"You have changed also. I would not have recognized you if Lewis had not pointed you out to me. It seems pathetic we should outgrow each other in these few years."

"I can readily account for your not noticing me; you had eyes for no one save your interesting charge. You were not aware of the curious glances bestowed upon you when you came to the station."

"No; I did not see any one looking at me particularly. Now that I think of it I must have seemed rather young to have so many children, and all of a size nearly. I do not wonder the people were puzzled," she remarked indifferently.

"Not a single individual there mistook them for your own children," he said, with difficulty restraining a smile.

"Probably they thought I was their sister." Her eyes rested on the seven faces turned again to their interrupted refection with new interest, and a measure of regret to think she was not rich enough to claim so many kindred.

"Do you remember how I used to wish that you were my brother? I think it was partly from selfish motives. I wanted some one with whom to share my troublesome belongings," she said honestly.

"I remember very distinctly the first hours we spent together in the library hunting for a book about grubs and insects, that I resolved I would be worthy of your kindness."

"You have fulfilled your resolve."

"Not yet; I am a long way still from fulfilling it; but some day I may be worthy of your friendship."

"O, Donald! how can you say that? As if you were not so far above me now I can scarcely dare to call you my friend; it seems like presumption."

"The world would say the presumption was all the other way; I am glad you have kept free from its spirit and taint. I was so afraid I should find you spoiled, but I might have known better — understood you better."

"But you are surely disappointed in me? I have failed as a student, did you not know?"

"Yes, I knew." He spoke very soberly.

"I tried, for your sake, to be learned, but after I met Dora and found out about the suffering there is in the world I could not waste any

more on myself. Mark will be a scholar in my place."

"I have never heard of Dora."

"She was the friend I took in your place. I thought you had forgotten your promise about being my friend always. I never had so much as a line from you all these years."

"I was always selfish, Angela; at least so far as time went. That is my only excuse, save that I never thought of writing. I could not know that you would care to hear from me."

"It would have been a great waste of your time, for you could not have written to me about what most interested you, since I was not clever enough to understand about those subjects, and no doubt I would have found it a bore answering your letters. I always do when I write to any one, and yours would have been hardest of all, for I would have tried to make you think there were some brains stored away in my head capable of good strong thought, and honestly I do not think there are."

"I am not so sure that your estimate is correct."

"Well, I have left off trying to be very much, and it is such a relief. Now I can read and enjoy the very best writers, since I can give myself up to the pleasure of reading, without having

to analyze and criticise, and all such nonsense, when it is as much as I can do honestly to read the daily papers."

She fancied Donald was regarding her with an air of disappointment, so she hastened to add: "It is no use trying to deceive one's self. It looks so pathetic to me seeing people who are only small, commonplace individuals, straining all their powers to be something quite beyond their reach. They lose all the cream of life, as they go along, grasping at the impossible, and for the most part leaving undone the simple work easily within their reach."

"You are determined to do the simple duty. My father writes me very often about your Mark and Lucy. He thinks you may be proud of Mark yet. And these — are they to be adopted, too?"

"No; I am taking them home for a holiday. I think I can give them a start they won't forget for a good while; perhaps I may get homes for them," she continued hopefully.

Lewis interrupted their conversation. He looked down haughtily at Donald, but stood silently waiting for him to leave. When they saw him approaching Donald whispered, "Will I make way for him?"

"Not unless you wish to; I had rather not have him beside me."

Lewis was forced to speak, which he did as rudely as he dare, but Donald was rather too muscular to venture many liberties with.

"I will thank you for my seat," he said at last.

Angela arose directly, and casting a glance up and down the car, said to Donald, "I see a vacant seat back here."

Then turning to the children she said, "I am going farther away, but you will be just as well behaved as if I sat near you?"

"Yes, mum; we'll be good," they responded heartily, their keen eyes twinkling with pleasure at the discomfiture of the exquisite young man who stood helplessly watching Angela's energetic movements. She was not obliged to vacate her seat, for Lewis gathered himself together and marched with great dignity out of the car. With a look of amusement she sank contentedly down, and the remainder of the journey she was left severely alone by the offended Lewis. She felt very certain his indignation would be of short duration, since it was utterly impossible to offend or snub him. Lewis knew the prize was too rich a one to lose for the luxury of giving way to his temper.

In the early twilight they reached Longhurst. Wardell and Mark were at the station to meet them with a pair of horses and great farm wagon large enough to hold a fair-sized Sunday-school. Mark was anxious to have his old associates impressed at once with the quantity and quality of pleasures in store for them, and had the horses and wagon both decorated with such odds and ends of bright ribbons and bits of worsted as he could lay his hands on. The team altogether was very astonishing in appearance, but Angela only smiled at her variegated equipage, and complimented Mark on his industry. Lewis Moxton stood with a group of young men a little apart from the people on the platform solacing his wounded sensibilities by sneering remarks at the expense of Angela, Donald and their companions. But the merry crowd starting out in the soft twilight were indifferent to their sarcasms.

The rain had ceased at midday, the moon was just climbing the distant horizon, shedding its faint light across the broad band of water that stretched southward for many a long mile, and the air about them had the perfume of multitudes of blossoms, folding themselves softly away now for the long night's refreshment. What a revelation these visions of wide sweeping uplands

and sheeny waters, the perfumed air and deep silences were to the city waifs. Patrick Cauty sat with his back to the horses in unbroken silence. Could it be possible that this wide, fair world, so clean and still, was made the same as the slums where he had all his life herded? In the clear eyes a new wondering light was shining. Could this be like the green fields and running brooks of the land far, far away they were often set to sing about in the Sunday-school? He had never rightly understood what those things meant, although he had on both occasions gone with the rest to the picnics by the seashore; but that place was not like this. Even this world was, it seemed, not all created alike. He wondered if God grew tired sometimes while he was creating the huge pile, and alighted some parts of it—cities for instance. New, strange thoughts came crowding into his brain, and, for the first time in all his life, he was glad he too had been given a place among all the teeming existences in the universe.

He felt it very good to be alive, and just in the place he was then located. This feeling was intensified when they reached the Pines and sat down to the delicious dinner Lindsay had magnanimously prepared for them; fried chicken,

cold ham, eggs and bacon, vegetables, and such light bread and biscuits as it had never been his privilege to roll under his tongue, with jams and pickles and hot coffee with a yellowish substance floating on top which was a mystery to him, but gave a flavor to the coffee that was surprising.

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CHAPTER XV.

NEW HOMES.

ANGELA found as the weeks wore slowly away that she had assumed a rather trying charge. Not one of the children she had brought from the city could endure the thought of going back. They were not like the old ladies provided with comfortable country homes, who speedily surprised their benefactors by turning up in their old haunts, their only shelter a wretched garret in the city, with the excuse that people were more company than stumps. To send them back against their will was a task too painful for her, and to keep them all at the Pines was equally difficult, since Lindsay could hardly tolerate them for a few weeks.

Lucy also made matters more difficult; she was inclined to put on airs both of ownership and superior knowledge, that the others found particularly exasperating. Mark and the other lads

got on with very few fractures of the peace. He had never yet broken his promise in the matter of fighting; this, and the instinctive feeling that they were his guests in part, kept him from violating the proprieties to any serious extent, although he found it trying not to punish the lads as they richly deserved, when he found them indulging their mischievous and destructive tendencies. Angela was sometimes forced to treat with some of the worst acts of insubordination, not only to placate Mark, but Lindsay, who declared that her gray hairs were getting brought in sorrow to the grave by the doings going on under her own eyes.

The punishment meted out to the offenders was not only distasteful to themselves, but unsatisfactory to Mark and Lindsay, who agreed that the offenses were out of all proportion to the punishment.

If they could have perfectly read the workings of those youthful hearts as they sat in Angela's own private sitting-room, which she had lately fitted up regardless of the prevailing fashions in upholstery, but in her own eyes a perfect gem of a room, they would have discovered that her mode of punishment was much more distasteful to the victims than the corporal punishment they

would themselves have suggested. Angela rather enjoyed having them brought to her for some act of misdemeanor, since she could take them, one at a time, and administer the solemn lecture that under ordinary circumstances she would have found almost impossible.

An hour spent in that room with its exquisite furnishings, and alone with its fair young mistress, who sat with their hand held tenderly in hers talking in that sorrowful way over their failings and misdeeds, made them actually long sometimes to be back in the dirty streets of the city. There they were at least free from such painful scenes as this, and while undergoing their torture, the delicious fare at the Pines that was rounding out their forms and faces in such a surprising way, and the fun and frolic that occupied most of their time when not engaged in mischief, seemed a high price to pay.

They were not specially bad children, but human nature left unrestrained for ten or twelve years is usually at the best a very weedy affair. If they had the original "germ of goodness" the said germ had about lost its vitality.

Angela was beginning to see how very little could be accomplished for the children in a few weeks' training, and since they were so opposed

to going back to city life again, she began to look about her very anxiously for homes where they would be subjected always to pure, healthy influences. Accompanied by Mark for teamster, and first one and then another of her young visitors, she made excursions more or less extended through the neighboring hamlets, seeking homes for them. She wanted them away from town life altogether, preferring the comparative innocence of lonely farmsteads to Longhurst, or places similar to it. Mark knew what the object of these delightful excursions was for; he enjoyed them for several reasons.

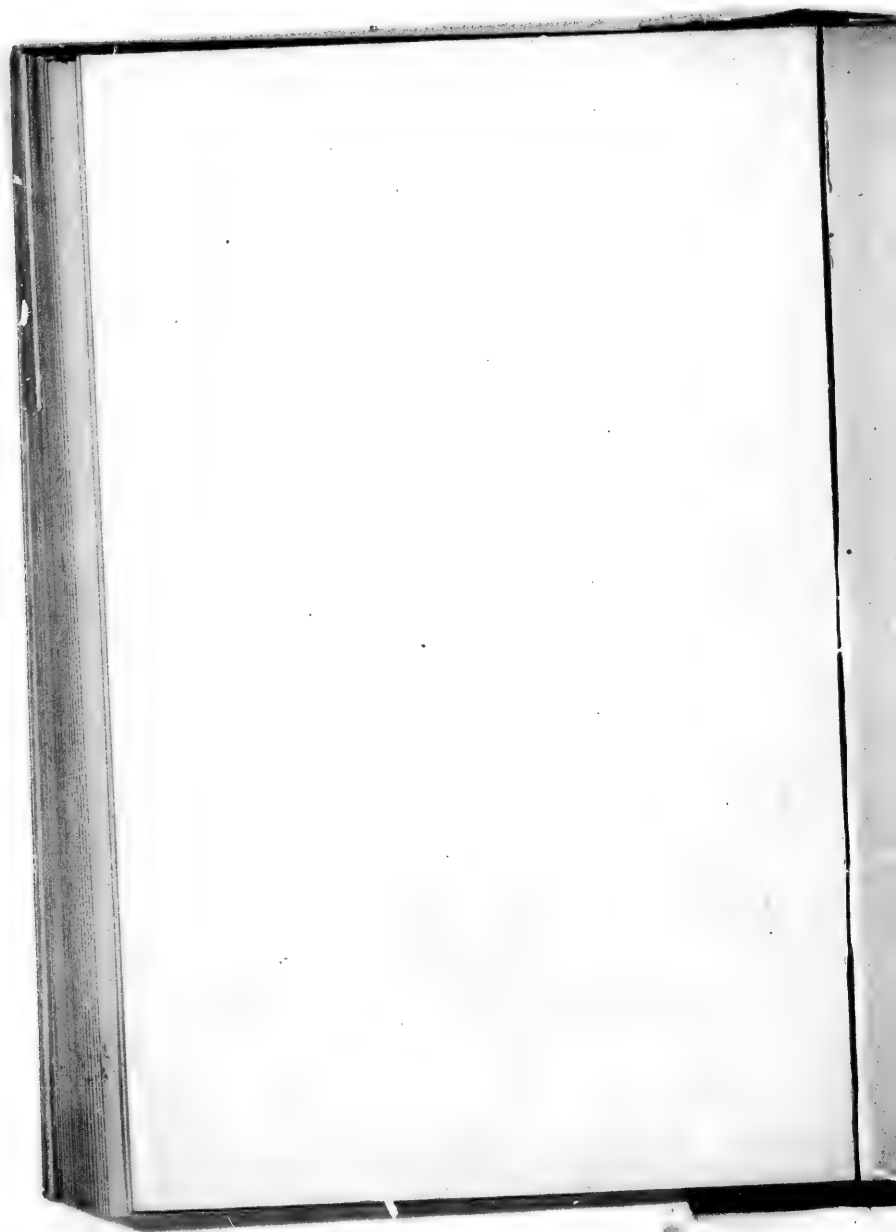
Angela was never so charming a companion as when she had two or three with her, sitting behind a proud-stepping horse whom she had cherished in her affections from its colthood, and who knew and loved her almost with the affection of a noble dog. What stories she would tell — thought out, probably, as they went along — and with a moral so applicable to the needs of her listeners they were filled with amazement at the similarity of experiences young people have in this world. Then she had a passion for natural scenery, and would, even in the most exciting portions of her story, pause to direct their attention to some surpassingly fair scene near at hand,

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SEEKING A HOME FOR HER YOUNG VISITORS.



or away towards the far horizon. Mark used to think he would never have got so well acquainted with the world he lived in but for her. Then, for the more depraved nature of him there was another, and far different sort of satisfaction.

To be driving a fat, shining horse who arched his neck and tossed his mane, while he curveted and biased along the shady, tree-bordered lanes, with a pair of admiring and extremely envious eyes watching his hands, and the horse, was a satisfaction dear to his heart.

Mark generally could tell by Angela's face when she came back to the carriage, from a call at a farmhouse, if she had met with success or failure. She always took the boy or girl for whom she was seeking a home, into the house with her, and then on some pretense or other would send them out to Mark again while she plead their cause alone.

One morning while her visitors were enjoying their breakfast, she asked which of them were most anxious to get homes in the country. Instantly seven voices more or less muffled with oatmeal and cream, cried, "I would!" and directly the interest in their breakfast ceased.

"I have found a very good home at Farmer Ingledorf's, out on the new road; he wants the

boy and girl he has decided to adopt, to go out there to-day, to remain permanently."

"Please let me go," came more or less impetuously from seven mouths.

"You are all of you quite sure that you will be content in a quiet farmhouse — not be homesick for the crowds in the city, and the noise and bustle?" she asked.

"Certain! who wants to go where there ain't a cow or hen or squirrel?" one of the boys said contemptuously.

"I would like to go back to see my mother sometimes," Maimie Anderson said pensively. "You see she's sick most of the time, and she's got nobody but me."

"We expect to bring her here to live; how would you like that?" Angela asked, with a smile that Maimie thought was the most beautiful expression of face she had ever beheld.

"Where could she live?"

"I have been speaking about her to Mr. Ingledo f. He has spare room for her in a cottage where one of his farm hands lives. She will get all the sewing she can do from the farmers' wives in the neighborhood. They will be mutually helpful to each other."

"Won't you let me go to live with Mr. Ingle-

dorf? Please do let me go, so I can see my mother every day!" Maimie pleaded, with tears in her eyes.

"Yes, Maimie; it is already decided that you are to go there, and I shall write to your mother to-day. She can sell her few sticks of furniture, and we will set her up with what she needs here — articles clean and safe, to take into a decent house."

Maimie danced around so joyously one could fancy even the ministering angels would feel more comfortably as they passed to and fro on their errands of love.

"Your visit here had not really terminated, but good Mrs. Ingledorf was anxious to get her children. She has never had any of her own, and is prepared to love you very dearly, if you will only do what is right."

"Please, 'm, which of us is going?" Patrick Canty, the most trying one in the lot, asked anxiously.

"I could not recommend you, Patrick," Angela said reproachfully. "I do not know if I dare trust you in any home, you are so" — She hesitated, not willing to hurt the lad's feelings by telling him the truth.

"I'll be that good after this you'll never have to

say again I'm so bad." He finished the sentence for her.

"Billy Kay has been the fortunate boy, this time, to get a home; but there are other kind people who have almost decided to adopt some more of you. The next best boy shall have the first offer." Patrick's face settled into an expression that implied his intention of being good, no matter at what cost, so as to secure the first vacancy.

Maimie, and Billy Kay, who was a quiet, well-intentioned lad naturally, washed themselves until their faces shone, and performed their toilet with a precision that was only limited by their supply of garments. When they drove away, the remaining five were grouped on the fence and gate post, watching them with envious, longing glances. It seemed such a wonderful stroke of luck to be going out to that pretty cottage, living in the lap of plenty — all their lives long if they wished; no more newspapers to sell, no more jostling in cruel, crowded streets with tattered garments and empty stomachs, smelling the odors of good things wafted up from the cellars of the pastry cooks — but smelling only; sleeping in the summer time on the hard seats in the Park gardens, in the winter wherever they could find a shelter and rag

to cover them. They were, on the whole, five dolorous faces that watched the carriage out of sight, and then instead of meditating on mischief, they fell to remarking on their folly in not having conducted themselves more wisely when they might, one of them, have gone in happy Billy's stead. He was the victim of fewer clever tricks than any one of them, and was in consequence looked down upon; so apt is human nature to indulge in that luxury, no one is quite so poor in every way but what he can put on a few airs of superiority over some one else.

"I tell you, I'm bound not to go back again to Cooper's Alley," Patrick said defiantly. "I mean to stay where there's plenty to eat, and elbow-room past reckoning."

He started for the house to get the catechism; studying that was a branch of education against which he had set his face with steady resolution, since coming to the Pines, for Patrick did not care much for religion of any kind. Angela's catechism and religious teaching generally, he had treated with the sublime indifference youths twice his age frequently affect. Now he made up his mind to learn anything he was required, and to this end he began in great earnest to study the catechism. Angela was astonished at the

lesson he brought her that evening, thoroughly learned; a few days more, and he would have the entire book in his head.

"Why, Patsey, I had no idea you were so bright," she said admiringly.

"It's good I'm going to be, ma'am," he said soberly. "When I get this book done I'll pitch into anything you say."

"But you must learn very easily."

"No, m'm; I just worked hard; the sweat poured off me part of the time."

"I have been sadly discouraged about you, but you have done so well to-day, I think you may make somebody yet; I am getting proud of you already."

Patrick looked triumphant, but Lindsay just then gave such a contemptuous sniff his eyes began to flash, and for fear of undoing his good day's work he walked out of the house. Lindsay was constantly on the lookout for some latent mischief in them all, but especially in him; and when one looks constantly for anything, they are pretty sure to find it.

The following day Angela took them all out to Mrs. Ingledorf's to see her new family. They found them in a white house with green shutters, red chimneys, a veranda surrounded with green

trellis-work, and hanging from every window that they could see, were white lace curtains with pink and blue bows of satin ribbon fastened on. There was a white picket-fence all around the inclosure, a garden in front filled with old-fashioned flowers, some of them, like the carnation-pink, jump-up-Johnny, cabbage rose, and sweet pea and mignonette, making the air luscious with their perfume; back of the house was a kitchen garden in the primmest order imaginable; a little way beyond this garden was a deep, quiet stream where the speckled trout disported themselves, seldom deceived by the fisherman's fly, for Mr. Ingledorf did not have much of a weakness for trout, a bit of nicely-cooked bacon, in his estimation, being much better eating than the finest trout in his preserve. Over this stream was built the milk room, which, like everything else about the premises, was as beautifully clean as if it had just been transported from that famous old city in Holland, where they scrub the very streets.

Maimie and Billy were sitting on the veranda, the former with a very clean, home-made doll in her lap, the latter gazing longingly at a new jack-knife, while he was trying to study the lesson set for him. Good and quiet as he was, Billy Kay

would have enjoyed being outside somewhere, where he could whittle, than on that spotless veranda with womenkind and rag babies; besides, he was very much ashamed to be caught in the daytime in such company. Mrs. Ingledorf was sitting between them, her face beaming with maternal satisfaction; to have two such nice children ready made to her hand was enough to fill any empty, childless heart with rapture, so she decided.

Angela's face caught the reflection of supreme content on Mrs. Ingledorf's countenance, but the five discontented youths who followed her looked anything but satisfied. Maimie and Billy were dispatched to the parlor for chairs, and were then commanded to follow Mrs. Ingledorf somewhere to the outlying regions, whence they soon returned, bearing a kettle of delicious milk that in any of our cities would be sold for the best of cream, and a loaf of frosted cake. Mrs. Ingledorf disappeared again, and soon returned with a tray and tumblers, when she pressed her visitors to help themselves, an invitation they responded to so heartily, that on the following morning they came downstairs with a very depressed view of the world in general.

Angela and Mrs. Ingledorf fell to planning

about Maimie's mother, who would, if all went well, be on hand in the course of a few days, while the young folks had their own topics quite as interesting as what their seniors were discussing, while they strolled around the premises to examine more minutely the elegant home their two companions had dropped into, and then went off for a chat with Mark, who was sitting in the carriage by the gate.

Billy had all his life long been an individual of extremely small importance among his acquaintances, and to take these from one spot of interest to another, pointing out our flowers and pumpkins, and pigs and fowls, lifted him suddenly in his own eyes almost into a hero, while his companions felt too depressed by what they had themselves lost to attempt taking him down a bit. They bade adieu at last to Mrs. Ingledorf and her happy family, their own faces so wistful and melancholy she felt like adopting them all on the spot.

On their way home Patrick inquired very particularly if there were any more such women as Mrs. Ingledorf in that section of the country, but Angela, advised beforehand by Lindsay, did not give very satisfactory replies; they wished to see first steady improvement in his general conduct

before they turned him adrift. It was astonishing what will power he possessed. From the moment when he found that, to a great extent, he held in his own hands his future destiny, the improvement was amazing.

To go back to the starved, filthy life of the city was a contingency he could not dwell upon with calmness; as the time drew near when he expected the command would be given for him to depart, the dumb pleading in his face was almost more than Angela could bear. She controlled, however, her desire to tell him that he was to stay, since she had an almost childish determination that he should not only take away with him the contents of the catechism, but a good deal more didactic literature; Lindsay assured her if once he knew he was to have a place, there would be an end to such effort. The very fact that he preferred the innocent country life encouraged Angela's belief that he possessed the elements of a noble character, if it were only subjected to proper nurturing influences.

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CHAPTER XVI.

THE NEW DAVID GRANT.

For the next few weeks Angela was very busy indeed. Mrs. Ingledorf helped her, however, more effectually than any one. She was so loud in her praises of the two children which Angela had brought her, that other farmers and their wives in her vicinity were induced to make trial of them. Besides, Angela had such seductive ways of coaxing the plain farmer folk — her manners, that by instinct more than training were so courtly, had more influence than their own actual need in the matter. In her rounds she met with so many families that, by slight self-denial, could adopt a waif from the slums, and make its life a gladness, and possibly a success, that she was beginning to indulge the dream that it might be wise to import a fresh supply of children.

All of the seven were settled now in homes of

their own, save Patrick Canty. He had got his head so full of catechism and kindred literature, that he complained to Mark his hat was getting too small. He attributed the enlargement of his head to this alone, forgetting that good solid tissue had been gradually forming on all his ill-clad bones, his head included. He felt it very keenly that his efforts at reformation had received such scant recognition. It was certainly a rather bitter discipline, seeing all the other six going singly, or in pairs, to comfortable farmsteads, and entering at once and heartily into the affairs of their respective owners, claiming proprietorship in quadruped and biped, garden and orchard, while nothing apparently was being done for him, and nothing remained but a solitary journey citywards at the end of another fortnight, for he had kept faithful reckoning of the weeks.

One evening he went down to the edge of the pine wood, and stood leaning against the fence that shut it off from the meadow land. He moodily watched the sunset fading gradually from the far heavens, no part of it concealed from his sight by brick and mortar, when Angela joined him. He had been going very carefully over the doings of the past few weeks, and had come to the decision that not one of them had

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been better behaved than himself. He had looked down the long strip of highway that led out towards the great world which included also Cooper's Alley, and wondered why all his efforts had been unavailing, and feeling in prospect of passing over that road shortly for the last time, something as a condemned criminal might, as he surveyed the path leading gallows-ward. The effect these musings was having on him was to turn his naturally generous nature sour. Angela laid her soft white hand on the very grimy one that was idly scraping the flakes of whitewash off the weather-beaten fence.

"What is it, Putsey? you look very sober to-night."

"Wouldn't any one look sober if they had to go where I'm going in a few days? I'd most as soon die, and be buried here in the pine wood, where the birds could sing over me, and the sun and stars get a chance to look down on my clean grave."

There was a sound of tears in his voice, although the eyes looked steadily down the road.

"You need never go back unless you wish."

"Lucy told me to-day all the places was taken; I won't stay here much longer a burden on you. I'd rather sell newspapers than sponge."

"But if all the places are not taken up! Lucy does not know everything."

He looked at her almost greedily. There was such longing in the expression of his face.

"I've tried harder'n any of them, but nobody seemed to care what became of me."

The soft hand clasped the grimy one more tenderly.

"I care a great deal about what becomes of you, Patsey."

"I guess nobody else does, then."

"Yes, dear; there is One who loves you far better than I am able to — the One who died for you."

"But you cared more for the others than you did for me, even that Billy Kay. I didn't think you'd like him better'n me."

There was a world of reproach, and even shame in the way he spoke; as if Billy Kay being preferred before him was an exceedingly humiliating experience.

"Patsey, what will you say if I tell you I have tried harder to do well for you than any of the others; that I have got you the best place of all?"

"I'd say I could most die for you."

There was a passion of deep boy love in his eager, thrilling voice.

"There are some conditions you must first

comply with, before you can get into this good home."

He turned to her eagerly, the tears flashing now in the deep brown eyes, while he seemed to forget a boy's natural shame to be seen weeping.

"What are the conditions?"

"You must take the gentleman's name who adopts you."

"What's the difference about a name?" said Patrick, hesitating a moment only.

"Then it is settled you are to stay. And now, Patsey, what will you think when I tell you I have known about this for a good while; can you think why I did not tell you?"

"Perhaps you wanted me to learn all the catechism, and to see if I could be good if I tried."

"Those were my principal reasons. All the time that you were thinking so hard of me, and fancying that I was not treating you quite fairly, I was planning the very best for you that I knew; now that is the way God does with us sometimes; probably it will be your experience when you get to be a Christian; and O, Patsey! you must be one before very long. I believe you might be one to-night if you were in real earnest about it."

"Would it make much difference in me?"

"Yes; all the difference there is between light and darkness."

"Would you tell me just how to ask for it?"

Angela knelt with him there in the gloaming, the somber pines murmuring their melancholy whisperings above them. She talked to God directly of the young soul seeking knowledge of him.

"Can I pray just when I want to, or is it only proper to come to God night and morning?" he asked, as they walked along the dewy pathway to the house.

"We are told to pray without ceasing; if we have cares and worries you cannot think what a comfort it is to pray."

He merely nodded his head in reply.

"Say, if the fellows found it out and made fun of me, would it do to knock them down?"

"Most assuredly not. One has to fight themselves and the Devil, and leave others alone in that way."

"I guess it's going to be a pretty tough job—worse a good deal than the catechism."

"Usually, everything worth a good deal is hard to get. This is worth more than everything in this world, no matter how bright it may be."

"I'm glad a fellow can pray all he wants; if

it wa'n't for that the likes of me mightn't try. You see I've prayed before this. I did for a home and that was answered, though I didn't much think it would do any good."

"Ah! that is where people make mistakes; they pray and do not expect their prayers to be answered. There is something called faith that we must have. Now if I told you I should give you something to-morrow, or take you to some place, you would have faith in me that I would keep my word; now God wants you to have just that kind of faith in him; besides, nothing ever happens to him as it might to me to prevent the fulfillment of the promises. He is the only one who is sure to keep his word."

"Yes; I understand. Say, isn't He the very best friend one can have?"

"Yes."

"I am going upstairs now to think it all over, and I'll ask for that with all my might. Good-night."

Angela stooped and kissed the bright eager face. The kiss was returned, coming apparently straight from the generous child heart.

Patrick was the first one astir in the house the following morning. Lindsay scolded him for being around in the way so early, but he looked at

her so gently that, in her surprise, she burst out, "Bless me! what's happened to the boy?"

"I believe I've been converted," was the startling reply. "Have you ever been?"

"What a question! and me a church member long before you was born."

"Miss Angela says there is folks as deceives themselves."

"You'd better be careful you are not one of them, then."

Lindsay set the dishes on the table with a crash that made Patrick hastily decide it would be as safe, and probably a judicious move on his part, to go out of doors and wait until a suitable opportunity presented itself of telling Angela how he had sat up and prayed a good part of the time until the clock struck twelve, for strange to say, the longer and more earnestly he prayed, the more anxious he became to get a change of heart, for this really was the burden of his prayer. He was not used to solitary vigils, and sleep naturally overcame him, but when he awakened in the morning there had come such strange peace into his heart he sprang out of bed, and kneeling in the soft light of the early morning he thanked God for having become his master.

The following day Angela took him to his new

home; it was some miles away, in a university town, where there was every advantage for an ambitious lad to get a first-class education. The couple who had consented to adopt him were old friends of Angela's father's. Mr. Grant and he had been at college in the Old World together, and the acquaintance begun there had ripened into a friendship terminating only at the death of the latter. He was professor of mathematics in the University, and was a man of more than average grasp of intellect, but as simple in his manner and tastes as a child. His own boys had proved the wisdom of his peculiar ideas as to the wise training of youth, every one of them thus far bidding fair to make their lives not only a success for themselves, but a blessing to others. These were now all working for themselves, while their parents were still young enough to take the responsibility of helping some other person's child along the difficult path of youth.

The success that had crowned their efforts in the up-bringing of their own children, made Angela very eager to have them take Patrick, for she had fully made up her mind that, taken all in all, he was her choicest find among the slums, not even excepting her own Mark.

CHAPTER XVII.

ANOTHER JOURNEY OF MERCY.

MAIMIE's mother came, and the country air and fare proved so beneficial, she began to hope that the lease of life had been indefinitely extended. A very cheering hope, especially as her acquaintances had freely volunteered the information that she was only going away to die. She was handy with the needle, although she had never learned a seamstress's trade, so that the farmers' wives in the neighborhood kept her well supplied with work, and as she preferred to get her pay in those delicious products of the farm which they appeared to hold so cheaply, she began to long for the society of her child more than ever.

Mrs. Ingledorf regretfully consented to part with Maimie, while Angela, coming to the rescue, promised to go to the city, in order to get her the prettiest child connected with the mission. And so, to Lindsay's sorrow, Angela once more started

on her mission of help. Lindsay was pretty certain that more than one child would be brought back, and wondered what strange misfortune had overtaken their house, that such doings should be carried on there. With her wealth and position, Angela might be taking her place with the best in that locality, instead of scouring the country back and forth, with a crowd of naked and starving children trailing behind her. It was a most bitter discipline for poor Lindsay, and she used to slip out of church at Longhurst on Sunday mornings, scarce looking to the right or left, for she was keen enough to observe what Angela was too indifferent to notice — that the strange doings at the Pines were subject to sarcasm with the Longhurst people.

Angela did return not only with a blue-eyed, flaxen-haired little princess of a girl, snatched from the horror and degradation of a girlhood amid the alms, but with a boy and girl additional. And to appease Lindsay, she assured her that, if she had herself seen the cellar where they managed to exist, she would have rescued them too. Lindsay gave a groan, but did not give further expression to her outraged sensibilities.

Mrs. Ingledorf went into raptures over her acquisition, and the way that fairy-like child was

fed to banish the starved look, was extremely satisfactory to the little creature. To have all the milk she could drink, and white bread, with beef and fowl and vegetables, and all the fruits and good things generally that are found in the storerooms of a wealthy farmhouse, was a revelation to her. She was not only beautiful so far as face and form went, but had a loving nature, and before Mrs. Ingledorf knew it, she was answering with great satisfaction to the name of mother, which little Flossie began to speak instinctively. There was an additional charm about her which Maimie lacked, since she had no knowledge whatever of parents or relatives; she had lived as long as she could remember with an old woman who would not give any satisfaction respecting her origin.

It was some slight consolation to Lindsay when she saw the Ingledorfs, on the Sabbath morning, drive to the church door with their handsome team, and hand out the two well-dressed children. Angela's satisfaction was equally great, but it sprang from a different impulse.

Angela began to find her social claims considerably extended after this. Her boys and girls, as well as the friends who had adopted them, wished to be visited very often, for each of them

seemed as anxious to report progress to her as if she had been a staid adviser of fifty. A few circumstances occurred that pained her, for neither the children nor the people who had received them into their homes were quite perfect, but after talking the difficulties over with the afflicted parties she generally made matters smooth. She had the happy faculty, unfortunately denied to most of us, of easily finding the key to people's hearts and convictions.

A half-hour spent with a toil-worn and roughened pair, talking over the inevitable unpleasantness that even parents and children know something about, her voice sweetly modulated, her manners as deferential and courtly as if she were conversing with the highest in the land, and the gracious, kindly presence which even the dumb animals seemed to comprehend, smoothed away little difficulties wonderfully, and when she rose to leave, the people generally took fresh determination to do their duty well by the charge she had committed to them. Neither were they jealous of the great pleasure evinced by the children at her appearance. There was something about her that disarmed jealousy; possibly it was because there was so little in her own composition; like generally begets like.

She was especially gratified when assured of their success at school. They soon discovered there was no better way to gain her approval than to bring a good account of themselves with regard to their studies: for the brightest ones she had not only encouraging smiles, but more tangible proofs of her appreciation of their efforts to please her.

She did not receive any special consolation because of her work from Longhurst society: it was so criticised, and the surprise at the oddness of her taste so outspoken, she usually wended her way home from a round of calls, in a very depressed state. Wardell and his wife were almost the only ones among her old acquaintances who encouraged her, and to them she used to go for sympathy when most discouraged. Donald too seemed to think it might be better superintending the wise development of a score or so of youths, than to be devoting all her powers of brain, time and money for her own furtherance; this from him was just the encouragement needed.

The hint let fall that she might increase the number of her beneficiaries had a stimulating effect. Strange to say, she saw very little of him on this visit of his. He seldom came to the Pines and, for some reason or other, she as seldom went

to the Wardells' cottage; neither did she meet him at any social gatherings in the town. Although, as a student, he had taken a higher position at college than any young man belonging to Longhurst had ever done, yet he was not any more noticed by the leaders in society there than if he had been a farm servant. They held tenaciously to their rights, and since they had no other special gifts of which to be vain, save wealth and social position, it was very judicious on their part to make much of their limited belongings.

It is a curious fact that the more ignoble the nature the more stress is laid on the accident of birth and the things generally that are patent to the dullest intellect.

Donald's name had been mentioned in Angela's presence at an occasional tea party, but spoken with an air of patronizing contempt very provoking to her.

One evening at a gathering at Mrs. Mordaunt's, Joshua Moxton, a leading merchant in the place, said in a very pompous manner, "Ah! I believe that boy of Wardell's has done very well at college; let me see, don't his father work for you, Miss Marlowe?"

Angela assented to his remark by a frigid inclination of the head, while she assured herself

that Donald did not need her defense, and that Longhurst was a very insignificant portion of the earth, any way. Even if he did become great enough one day to make famous, because he had been born there, the place that held him so cheaply, these people so out of touch with the great world's thought, would be in blissful ignorance of the fact, and it would be useless for her to assure them such a day was easily within the possibilities.

Angela, in obedience to Lindsay's urgent desire, consented to receive and dispense hospitalities with Longhurst gentry, for Lindsay insisted this was a part of her duty in life, as much as feeding half-starved children, and assisting them to better things, but she resolved to keep herself as far as possible uninfluenced by their peculiar views of worldly affairs, or, to speak plainly, by their selfishness. She used to speculate a good deal about them, wondering if there was a solitary individual who practiced self-denial in a small way even to help others outside their own family circle save at the grand Christmas exchange. It is true they took pride in their several churches, got as handsome edifices as was convenient, without too great sacrifice of money, and secured as good pastoral supply as

possible. They had Sunday schools and prayer meetings, but, since these were a necessity in order to keep respectably abreast with the times, it is doubtful if there was any special virtue in the interest a portion of the various congregations took in them. In each church in Longhurst there were a few elect souls, worthy, I believe, one day to walk with Him in white, whom they served now with a faithfulness and zeal particularly tiresome to their less spiritual brothers and sisters, who often wearied of their close appeals, and earnest prayers. The donations of the various churches to the distant lands where men and women are starving both soul and body for want of a pure religion, would little more than pay the express charges to get their gifts to those benighted regions. Angela, it must be confessed, was no better in this respect than her neighbors — the heathen were a very obscure idea to her, and the missionary appeals to which she had listened had been humorous rather than tragic, as the case required.

She had taken hold of the work that had first appealed to her, and did that work in the spirit merely of an average Christian, recognizing the claims God had on her, together with every converted person, to help the suffering and do to

others, in a measure, at least as she would be done by. This appeared a part of her duty, as much as it was for the martyrs, with their lives, to witness for principle and God.

She failed to see anything extreme or Utopian in her work. There had been no special sacrifice made as yet. Her personal expenditure had not been lessened necessarily, by so much as a ribbon, and what need, then, was there for people to make so much fuss about what seemed to her a very natural work for every one of them to engage in, and as much their duty as her own? She began assuring them of this fact so fearlessly, that at last criticism was reserved for her absence.

As she went her rounds from week to week, and looked in the rosy, bright faces, lately so wan and wretched, she came to the conclusion there would be no particular merit credited to her in the Book of Life, since she got such grand recompense without having to die to secure it.

Patsey was very happy in his new home. Mr. and Mrs. Grant seemed quite as confident of the genuineness of his conversion as he did himself, while they were getting as ambitious for him as they used to be about their own sons. Mr. Grant was superintending his studies with the expectation of having him take a college course, while

the lad himself was fully as eager as any of them to be a scholar as well as Christian. Mrs. Grant mothered him as tenderly as if he had been a grandson, and not one of her own children ran the same risk of being spoiled through over-indulgence; but the Spartan training of his early years kept him robust-hearted, and besides, his was not one of those natures apt to be overcome by luxury. Angela was proud of him, and many an excuse was urged why she should make a trip to Barnsley, where the Grants lived, just for the pleasure of seeing her promising boy. She had him pretty well convinced that he was destined to be a missionary, or preacher of some sort, instead of a farmer.

The task was an easier one after Patsey had been given an opportunity to compare other modes of living beside that of agriculture, with the existence he had endured in Cooper's Alley. Mrs. Grant used to assure her, as time wore on, that the new David Grant bade fair to attain a perfected manhood only second to that of his honorable namesake, for, like all true wives, that worthy lady was blind to any shortcomings, intellectual or moral, in her husband, and was certain the first prize among men had, in some unaccountable way, fallen to her lot.

Angela had felt so jubilant over her success in getting homes for the seven previous importations, she reasoned that it would be perfectly safe investing in a couple more, a decision warmly encouraged by Mr. Sargeant, who assured her if there were a score or two of ladies like-minded and successful with herself, their work would be at an end in that part of the city. She made a more careful selection this time, securing children that were without claimants of any kind, and having special regard to their personal appearance, as she found that well-favored faces were more likely to go off readily.

There were now twelve children less exposed to the temptations and pinching want of the city. What a gladness it was to her as she thought of them in their clean, moral homes, getting trained for lives of usefulness; brothers and sisters all of them, she claimed in her own secret heart, losing thereby the sense of loneliness that had haunted her ever since the death of her father.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

A PROMISE.

It was Donald's last day at home, and Angela resolved to break the crust of coldness that had in some unaccountable way settled upon their friendship. He had scarcely come even to call at the Pines, since his return, unless the brief visits paid to the library could be called such; he would slip in there, usually when she was absent from home, and stay sometimes for hours.

"He don't make as much noise as a mouse, and only that I let him in I wouldn't know he was there," Lindsay complained, for even she would have enjoyed seeing something of the human side of the young man; but no doubt she respected him, like womenkind in general, for the cavalier way he treated her. She was opposed to anything like sycophancy, and could be easier won by apparent indifference than the opposite.

It was one of those steady downpourings from

the overflowing clouds that often come to us in the heart of summer, and that seem to refresh all created things. Lindsay remonstrated with her when she saw her come into the room prepared for a walk; Angela's voice was low and a trifle unsteady, as she explained where she was going.

"You need not be uneasy if I do not return directly; perhaps I may stay for tea."

Lindsay received the intimation in silence. Angela was so indifferent to the attentions of young men in general, and some half-dozen or so in particular, foremost among the number Lewis Moxton, that her shrewd handmaiden began to wonder if the girl had not given her heart long ago to the companion of her girlhood. She never let fall a hint of her suspicions, lest by so doing she might put fancies into her mind, just as well not dropped there.

When Angela started out into the rain she was seized, for the first time in her life, with a feeling of shyness at presenting herself at the Wardell cottage. As she passed down through the dripping meadow path, her step was hesitating, and when half-way there she was possessed with a desire to turn about; but what excuse had she to offer Lindsay or herself either, for such unwar-

arrantable conduct? She compromised the matter by resolving not to remain for tea, much as she would have enjoyed one of those tea-drinkings, so rare in her experience, with Wardell conversing about some hero of whom he had been reading, and Donald uttering an occasional remark, Mrs. Wardell meanwhile looking anxiously over her "specs" to see that every one was attended to, and Jessie, the last one left at home, adding her slim quota to the general fund of entertainment. Imagination was so busy picturing the possible scene, she was at the door before she realized where she was; any other world had been shut out by her umbrella.

It was a timid knock that asked admittance, and almost directly Donald stood waiting for her to enter, while before she knew what they were about, her dripping wrap was laid away, and her favorite easy-chair drawn up before the fire in the keeping-room, for the day was chill, as well as damp, and Mrs. Wardell had a horror of damp rooms and garments. They had a good many ideas and items to exchange, so that there was no danger of the conversation lagging; but Mrs. Wardell and Jessie were soon compelled to see about the supper that was destined to be a superior one, from the double importance attached to it

— Donald's last at home for an indefinite period, and Angela's first in a good many weeks. Angela cared very little for the supper, but she did care a great deal for the privilege of sitting there in that cosy room alone with Donald. It seemed even better than the old times when they used to crouch together on the damp ground at the foot of a decaying tree, watching, on his part more especially, with absorbing interest, the movements of some tiny creature, rare from its excessive ugliness. She fell to wondering at last if he enjoyed sitting there with her as much as he would to have some hideous creeping thing with scales and a multiplicity of legs and eyes; she could not make free enough to ask him, however.

He busied himself showing her the books he had been studying during the holidays, and some specimens he had been so fortunate as to find; but she noticed that he did not once look into her eyes. He seemed anxious to be moving back and forth with a book or bug in his hands, and not as much inclined as she would have particularly liked to sit near her, telling his plans for the future — if he was still bent on having that house in the woods; how idyllic it seemed as she sat there, the mist like a heavy curtain shutting out the great, indifferent world. She fancied there

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could be nothing so delightful for her in the future as to be permitted some time to visit him in that house of his, and listen to him speaking to her in that low voice.

Donald was not willing to-day, apparently, to talk with her about anything human or natural. He took scant notice of her timid efforts to lead the conversation back to other days, or to the plans he was laying for the future; but still he was very gentle with her.

She was puzzled and even hurt that he held himself so resolutely from everything that might seem like a revival of the old intimacy; so far as the topics he permitted, she might have been his tailor, or some wrinkled scientist. The moments were passing so swiftly, and, alas, each separate one seemed more precious than anything on earth, for to-morrow Donald would be away, to return possibly at some distant period even more estranged than now. She ceased to pay much attention to his remarks, merely replying with a yes or no, as the exigencies of the subject he was discussing might require. She would rather have him sit near her in silence, than talk on subjects that seemed to lift him out of range of her ideas and sympathies.

She thought of Dora, while the tears came to

her eyes ; Dora who was so clever, and yet loved her so dearly in spite of her literary inaptitude. It did not seem necessary to try to conceal her overflowing eyes from Donald, for he was not taking much notice of her eyes or personality, so far as she could detect. All his efforts at entertainment were directed towards her intellectual faculties, while these, unfortunately, were not hungering for his ministries.

Even Donald could not maintain a learned discussion without some encouragement. His remarks were falling so flat he drew a halt at last, and going to the table, stood turning over the leaves of an illustrated book he had tried to get Angela to examine ; she did not know that his restlessness proceeded from a deeper pain than her own.

"How long before we may see you again?" she asked abruptly, startled for the moment by the quiver in her voice, and most heartily wishing she had not broken the silence.

"Not until I am in a position to claim the best — if it remains for me to claim," he added bitterly.

"Will it take you very long?" she asked timidly.

"How can I tell? perhaps I can never do it."

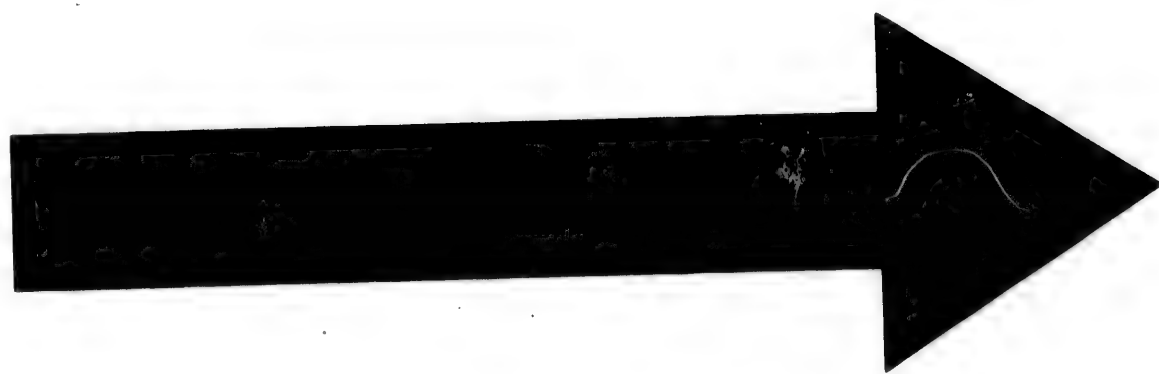
"O, Donald! is it possible we may never see you again?" Her voice was unsteady. How glad she was that she could dry her eyes unseen by him.

"They say everything comes to him who is willing to work and wait; perhaps what I want may come to me."

"I thought you did not care for money. Don't you remember in those happy days when we told each other everything, you planned to have a cabin away in the wild woods? It seems so beautiful to me sometimes to think of that little home, where everything would be natural and true."

"I did not know what I wanted then — a boy's heart is different from a man's."

She did not question any more. He spoke so sternly — as if her interference in his affairs angered him; that was the hardest of all to bear. He did not come near her; did not attempt to enlighten her intellect on those abstract subjects that were so tiresome, but still he was in the room with her, and they two were together; that was something, when to-morrow, next year, a dozen years hence, that experience might not be repeated. She did not know that he was watching the shapely head bent low on her hand as she sat



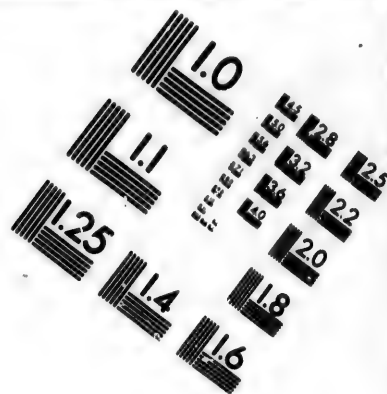
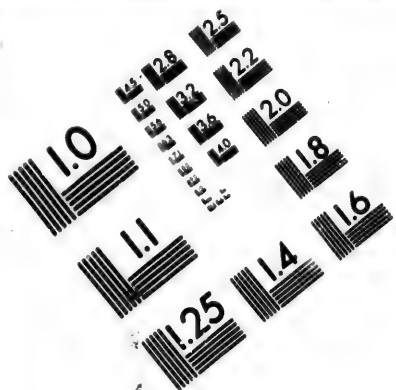
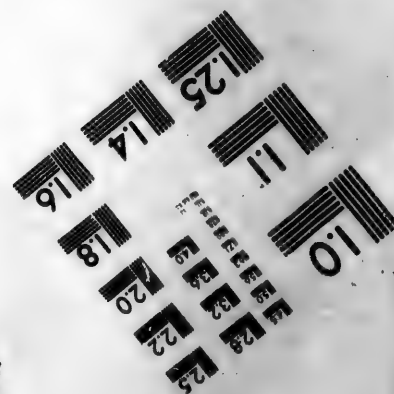
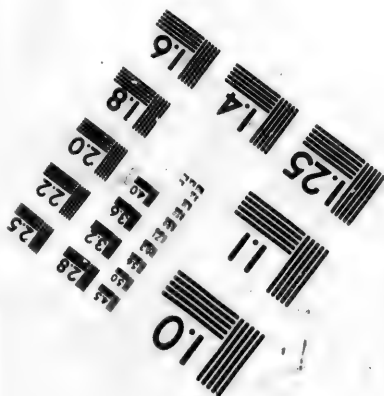
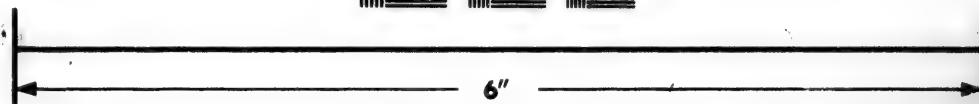
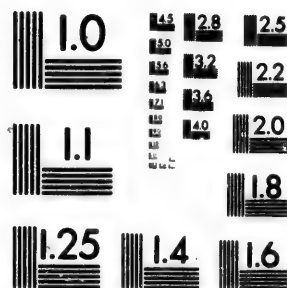


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in the firelight, wiping away the tears that kept coming in such troublesome profusion.

Not until he could come to her as an equal — confer honor rather than receive it — would he tell her of the love that had grown with him from boyhood. Nature grew too strong for him. He turned swiftly, and surprised her weeping.

"Angela, promise me that you won't marry any one until " — he hesitated — "until I come back."

He did not know how he was crushing the tender rose-leaf hand in his passionate grasp.

"I promise." What a glad heart shone up through the tear-filled eyes. He could not trust himself longer, but abruptly left the room, his whole being in a whirl of tumultuous emotion. All a successful lover's triumph in his heart — all his manliness and honor outraged because of the advantage he had taken of such a girl as Angela.

She was left alone, but she told her heart that now she was as much Donald's affianced wife as if the betrothal had been sealed with all the promises usual on such occasions. How gladly, how proudly, she would wait for him through the coming years, certain that he would claim her promise when the right time came.

She did not see him again until tea time. He

sat beside her at table, and was particular that she should be supplied with everything, but for the first time in her life Mrs. Wardell's cooking had lost its flavor; indeed, she wondered if she would ever care very particularly for food again. She had never felt so proud, so highly honored in all her life. To think that Donald should care for her—really want her for his wife—seemed an honor out of all proportion to her deserts.

David was unusually silent that night. None of his departed heroes were powerful enough to banish the thought that on the morrow the last of his boys, and the dearest, would leave the home roof. His two older sons were as ambitious in their way as Donald. Archie was somewhere now in the fastnesses of Australia, Andrew in the Sandwich Islands. From both of them came assurances of their prosperity, in the form of bits of printed paper holding their names for certain snug amounts for their parents' comfort. Agnes was preparing to be a teacher, and was then at a training school for teachers in a neighboring city. David was very justly proud of his children, and had an idea that few men had quite so much to be thankful for as he, when he fell to examining his mercies carefully.

Angela wished a sudden darkness might spread over the land, for then Donald would be compelled to see her home, but at that season the twilight had a habit of lengthening out until nearly bedtime. When the tea drinking was ended there was nothing for her but to don her waterproof and return to the home more lonely now than ever. Mrs. Wardell and Jessie busied themselves getting her ready, Donald at the further end of the room watching the labor of love with a passionate longing in his heart to claim her there before them all as his own till death. Mrs. Wardell liked her next to her own children, and enjoyed fully as much as Angela, these opportunities of mothering her. Angela crossed the room and gave Donald her hand. She could not trust herself far enough to murmur the softest good-by. He took the little hand given half-timidly, and then dropping it hastily turned and got his hat.

"I will carry your umbrella," he said brusquely.

The tears of pain that had been swelling her heart suddenly became joyous, and she was glad to escape from the watching eyes into the storm outside. Oddly enough she did not mind having Donald see her tear-filled eyes. If she could just have sobbed out all her loneliness and hunger for

kindred and love as they walked through the sodden meadows, she fancied after that it would be easier to bear the separation. Mrs. Wardell stood at the window watching them, her sight grown suddenly clear. She saw that they walked as slowly as if genial, sunny skies bent above them.

"Angela is only a child yet, and does not know her own heart; she should not trifle with the lad."

"What do you mean, mother?" Jessie asked curiously.

"I mean that Donald has given Angela all his heart, and she is leading him on; they are only children in some things, and do not know the mistake they are making."

"What mistake?"

"Why, thinking of love, child. What right have they to talk of such things?"

"Why not, mother?" she asked gently. "I believe they have always loved each other, and where could either of them get better suited? I think it is the most beautiful thing I ever saw outside of books."

"Child, you do not know what you are talking about. You forget Angela's birth and fortune. What has Donald to match it?"

"If she loves him she won't think of that."

She always thought he was better than any one, and she thinks so still; I saw it in her eyes when she looked at him. I did not realize then that it was love."

"She is too young to know her own heart. She will forget him and take up with some one else, and that will spoil his life. I wish she had not come to-day; no knowing what they may say to each other under that umbrella. My eyes did not get opened until I saw the tears in her eyes, and the glad look on her face as Donald went out with her; poor Donald! poor boy!"

She looked out into the misty twilight as if there might be a chance of hearing what was being said under that provoking umbrella, but there was no answering word.

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CHAPTER XIX.

A CALL.

AMONG her acquaintances, in the course of another year or two, Angela began to be regarded somewhat in the light of an emigration agent. She grew very anxious indeed to extend the circle of her acquaintance among farmer folk, and would take long journeys, accompanied by some plump-faced boy or girl. Sometimes she would come back alone; too often, however, for her own peace of mind, her youthful charge would return with her. Some of the boys and girls went off readily, others were kept on for months after the preparatory training that she now insisted on, had been completed. People were getting accustomed to her eccentricities, but, if she could prevent it, in her own presence, the work was not permitted to be the topic of conversation. There was much to encourage her in the conduct generally of the children.

Strange to say, she was impatient to have them all fine students, and no matter how favorable the report might be as to their general industry or docility, she would look upon them as comparative failures if this were the best that could be said in their favor. The new David Grant and her own Mark gave her great satisfaction.

Both of the boys were growing finely; strong muscular young fellows that their stunted childhood gave no promise of their ever becoming. Both of them were looking forward to a university career. Mr. Grant had promised to see that David was helped with the required means, while Angela although not now formally promising Mark the same had made up her mind to set him on the road for it if nothing more.

Many a lad after once getting a teacher's certificate had finished the rest unaided. Mark should have this as well as further help, to say the least. His time now was pretty much all given to study, save in the long midsummer holidays, when he and the other lads used to help the hay-makers. He had ever been reticent about his plans for the future, and while the others discussed what they were going to be, he listened, but said nothing. So far as morality went, he had been steadily persevering in right courses since that memorable

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day when Angela had counseled him on the matter of fighting, but on more spiritual topics he was, so far as any one could tell, as indifferent as a young heathen.

One day, however, in the early autumn, just after school had opened and he had been having a more than usually confidential chat with Angela—a privilege he coveted more than she could know—he suddenly told her that he was thinking of being a minister.

She was so surprised that for awhile she could think of no suitable reply. The very silence with which his remark had been received brought a quick flush of pain into the clear olive cheek, when he said, "Don't you want me to be one?"

"Yes, Mark; I would like you to be a preacher above everything, if I thought"—she was silent a few moments—"if I thought you had the necessary qualifications."

"Do you mean if I was a Christian?"

"Yes; that is my sole objection."

"It has seemed to me that is the only condition on which I can become a Christian. I must give all to get all; that is why I have held out so long."

"Then you have had the call?" she cried, with shining eyes.

"I am afraid I have ; I would rather do any thing than be a preacher, if I had my own choice." He spoke slowly, as if giving utterance to the words was painful.

"It is a strange experience ; I never heard of one similar — to be called before you are converted ; but perhaps you are a Christian, Mark, and do not know it."

"No, I am not ; one could tell light from darkness surely ; but I never felt as near being a Christian as I do now ; confessing that to you has eased my mind. I expect all that has hindered me was my unwillingness to do what God asked."

"Our best way is to look at the rewards different kinds of work will bring us ; besides, time soon slips by. It is, at best, only a brief interregnum of eternity."

"Time seems very long to me now — to think of preaching to people for fifty years ; I suppose, though, it will only be one sermon at a time."

"I would rather preach than do anything if I were a man ; I have the obedience, I suppose, without the call ; David, too, would be willing now to preach ; he would prefer it to the law, and there are others of my boys who would be willing, I think ; others, too, whom I should so much like to see in the pulpit."

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She spoke sadly as she thought of Donald — her Donald, from whom she never received so much as a message, away in another hemisphere, and already winning a name for himself in that world he looked upon as the noblest this side the stars — the world of thought and letters.

"How long have you been thinking of this, Mark?"

"More or less since that old preacher, Mr. Brandt, was here. I have repeated to myself a great many times some things he said that day. How I have wished that I had missed that sermon."

"Do you really wish it now, Mark?"

"Not so much since I have talked with you. I should like to be in the right way, no matter where it might lead me."

"Ah! that is the right way to be in, to feel like that, and I am only surprised that every one does not want to be God's special ambassador. — I mean every man."

"You are a special one."

"How can you say that, Mark?"

"Because all the good any of us may do will be through what you have done for us. I should have forgotten the impression that sermon made on me if, every day since, your example had not

been like the voice of conscience. If I ever get to be a preacher, and, like the eloquent ones, can tell all that is in my heart, I will tell you then how much you have done for me — my saint Angela."

He turned and walked abruptly away, leaving Angela standing alone in the old orchard, under a pear-tree loaded down with fruit. She reached up and picked a ripe pear, just on the point of dropping, borne down with the weight of its own richness. She stood looking intently at its russet skin, as if it contained some mystery of sweetness never seen in a pear before, and yet she was scarcely conscious that she held it in her hand. In that moment she realized that her work was coming back to her like the bread cast upon the waters, and that to be God's minister neither sex nor age make any difference. Her work would be as graciously accepted as if done by the best descendant of Adam. Then all at once the work seemed glorified, as if by some divine illumination. She stood, thinking deeply over the past, when the sister Dora of long ago, who had slipped into a higher school, seemed to stand beside her, bringing the best of both worlds nearer. It was her hour of supreme consecration. Henceforth she would shrink from no

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sacrifice so long as God commanded it. The work that had been undertaken and carried on in the light-heartedness, partly of an experiment that might result either in failure or success, and in either case was not to be taken too seriously, was henceforth to be her life work. Her means, her time, herself must be given. Because of Dora's words, that dying message, dictated by the passing soul on whom the clear light of eternity was descending, twoscore lives already had been rescued from the depths, and placed where they might learn to be true men and women. But what were they among the unnumbered mass of childhood, worse than homeless, friendless, and, alas, godless, and like to be till the veil dropped, and they were shifted on to other and eternal shores, scarce knowing whither they were tending, or why they were created at all for such poor ends?

She sank down on the grass within the shadow of the pear-tree, and thought it all out; thought more deeply than was her wont, for she was too much given to working by impulse, and this required close thought, for the difficulties were immense. If the Pines should be utilized as a training-home for the children on a large scale, retrenchments must be made all around in their

style of living, since to do the work, as in that hour's inspiration it had seemed possible to do it, would require a large outlay of money — larger, perhaps, than she could well afford, except by rigid economy, and that was something she had never exercised.

She laid her plans resolutely, well knowing the bitter opposition she might expect from Lindsay, and realizing, also, what an alteration it would make in her own life.

Hitherto, she had never brought more than seven or eight children into her home at once, and usually their ranks were soon thinned by removals; but now, to have every room occupied, with only two or three exceptions, and not her house alone, but her whole time devoted to the work — not for a few years merely, but until old age, if God left her so long in the world! Now she understood better the perplexed question that had always appeared so strange to her — her craving for love and kindred, her loneliness. In another way than she might have planned God had made her life full; would it be complete? but then, was any life complete? In happiest wedded love were there not ideals never reached? Few faces bore the repose of a quiet spirit, satisfied with the fulfillments of all their longings;

generally those countenances that come nearest revealing this, were found with those whom the great world would call its banished ones; guests of God only, and satisfied with the fare he gives.

Quickly she went to the house and announced to Lindsay the larger work she was going to undertake, patiently listening to her reproaches — her appeals that she should be satisfied with the work already done, and to think more of herself.

"I do want to see you married before I die, and with children of your own to chase these crazy notions out of your head," she said, with actual tears in her eyes. Lindsay was not one of the weeping kind, and it was the first time since her father's death that Angela had seen her so far moved.

"I should not marry in any case. O, Lindsay! I wish you would enter into the spirit of this work and help me."

"Why won't you marry? Haven't you never loved any one? dear knows there's plenty who seem to love you too well for their own comfort."

Angela did not attempt a reply.

Lindsay continued in a moralizing mood:

"Now you'll get into this work head over ears — I just know how things'll be — when presently some fine fellow'll come along and you are

that impulsive, if once you fall in love, it'll be worse on you than the measles, and you'll leave everything and follow him."

"You would be satisfied then, dear?"

"Well, yes; I'd be satisfied to see you marry most anybody that was the leastest bit decent. Why, I'd hold up both hands for you and Donald Wardell."

Lindsay watched keenly the effect her shaft might take. A sudden flame of color suffused the white face, and Angela rose and went to the window.

"That's how the cat jumps. I've thought as much this good spell," Lindsay said to herself, with a confidential nod.

"What can be the trouble, I wonder. Angela is humble enough to take a chimney sweep if he only had the qualities she dotes on," Lindsay soliloquized.

"I hope I didn't make you angry, hinting at such a thing? I know Donald's not your equal by a long ways, but I'm that anxious to see you settled I'd be willing for most anything."

Lindsay was shrewd enough to throw out a bait she felt pretty certain Angela would seize.

"Donald Wardell is worthy of a princess. He is so far above me I would be amazed if he asked

me to marry him. I could only believe it was for pity."

"Bless me! do you say so? Well, I didn't mean any offense to you, I'm sure," Lindsay said, more in response to the blazing eyes of the girl than the mere words she had spoken. "I'm willing to allow that he's good enough for Queen Victory, only for the matter of age."

Angela could not help smiling at Lindsay's sudden complaisance, while she was angry with herself for being entrapped.

CHAPTER XX.

AN UNPAID HELPER.

LINDSAY did not mention love or marriage to Angela again, but comforted her by the new, and altogether surprising interest she took in her work. The stately calm of the Pines was now a memory alone; the great rooms that in other days had served as guest chambers for the fashionable and cultured, were converted into sleeping wards for the children of emigrants from every quarter.

Angela's plans had been many times altered in the course of the last two or three years, more frequently to suit the exigencies of her purse, than the desire of her heart. The farm was cultivated now especially for the food that could be extracted from its well-nourished soil; time and money that had been expended in ornamentation were directed solely to making it yield good crops that might be turned into cash.

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Angela was developing into quite a shrewd business woman, and the excellent bargains her neighbors had been accustomed to make with her had become a tradition only. She bought and sold with an eagerness to make the most of every penny that, under other circumstances, might have awakened painful apprehension in the minds of her friends, lest she should develop into a miser. Her own personal expenses were getting reduced to an almost scientific precision, a new silk gown now being one of the unattainable luxuries, which, if indulged in, might be at the cost of a human soul — or so she reasoned. If we did not find, among a too self-indulgent humanity, some such rare, unselfish beings now and then, we might forget what possibilities for nobility and grand development men and women possess in the abstract.

It is so much easier to read of these, scattered, alas! at too great intervals along the generations from Enoch down to the last decade of the present century, than to join their slender ranks, but even to know that they have lived, and sacrificed and been glad in the life they have chosen is, to some of us, an inspiration, while we remember that they are our own species, that the same elements of character may be in ourselves, to be

developed fully in a world where selfish environments will no longer fetter us.

Wardell's sons were prospering so well now that the tokens of their filial regard were rendering daily toil on his part no longer a necessity. Indeed, they were so anxious for him to give up work that every letter seemed to have that for its principal message. He had been slow to respond; for one thing he did not wish to become a burden on his boys; indeed, this was not a necessity, for his own industry, combined with the good wife's thrift, had enabled him to lay by sufficient money, or nearly so, for their few wants, independently of the checks that came in nearly every letter. He could not, however, content himself with a life of comparative idleness. He could not read all the time; he cared nothing for neighborhood gossip; his own little garden was jealously tended by his wife, and so there was nothing left for him to do; beside he had been so long accustomed to going back and forth to the great gardens at the Pines, superintending all the affairs of the property, he did not feel like relinquishing the task to other, and, he believed, less competent hands.

For years, and in fact ever since he had worked there, he had been in the habit of going to the

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Pines on Michaelmas Day to settle up his year's accounts. First, with Angela's grandmother, then with her father, and now with herself. He made this last journey with a full heart, since it was possible Angela might not permit him to remain on his terms, and he had at last promised his sons to be a hired servant no longer. She had not received the slightest hint of his intentions, and accompanied him to the library with the gentle deference that she always observed toward Donald's father, more than to any other person. They went over the year's accounts; when she paid him the balance of his wages, he sat nervously handling the roll of bills and taking slight notice of her attempts at friendly conversation. She noticed his constraint and was growing nervous herself, when with an effort he said:

"The lads have forbidden me to hire for another year; they send home more money than we shall be likely ever to spend."

He did not see the look of pain in the face grown suddenly pale that was watching him, but he was startled at the changed voice.

"You leave me at a time when I need you the most; more than that, I shall miss you for other reasons."

Her voice failed her, and she sat looking steadily now at the carpet, as if she had never quite understood its pattern before.

"I am sorry to leave you. They have been writing for a good while, but I could not tell you."

"Do they all desire it?" she murmured, without raising her eyes.

"Yes; they seem to think I need rest. I never felt stronger in my life, but I cannot go against the bairns."

"I do not ask it." She spoke sorrowfully, wondering if that would be the way people would treat her all through life; when they no longer needed her help, leave her in loneliness. For a little while she felt very bitter against humanity in the abstract, but she soon conquered the feeling.

"You must have some one to oversee your work still. I have been thinking the boys here might do the work; it would save a man's pay, and I dare say money is worth more now than ever it was at the Pines since it came into your family."

Angela nodded her head in response to his remark.

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and we have come to the conclusion that we can satisfy the lads and help you at the same time. I will take charge of things just as usual, and that will save a man's pay. I promise things shall be as well looked after as they ever were."

Angela's only response was to burst into a passion of weeping.

"Dear heart, what has pained you so?"

Wardell's own voice, stronger and deeper than most voices, was unsteady, but she only wept the more.

"Surely you have not been thinking we were ungrateful, my child. Did you think I was going to leave you, after all the years of generous treatment I had received from this house?"

She did not attempt to contradict him.

"The lads never write but they mention you — all of them. If they had known how this was going to distress you they would not have asked it. How could any of us know that you thought so kindly of us?"

"You will not write to any of them how childish I have been," she entreated.

"I do not call it childish. I had forgotten how lonely you are, with no kin near you. One is apt to forget that hearts need other things than gold."

He arose, and glancing towards the drooping figure opposite, said, a little unsteadily: "You should have a husband, and bairns of your own. You have too tender a heart to be fighting the world single-handed; we did not know that you cared so much for others." He did not say "for us," as it was in his heart to say.

Angela arose, and turning to him said, with a brave effort at self-control: "I shall never forget your kindness, and now I am so glad that we shall be partners together in this work."

"You will not be more glad than I; there is no one, not even Mrs. Lindsay, who can take quite so much interest in your work and yourself as I."

She looked up at him with surprise, her eyes as suddenly dropping, for in that instant, in some mysterious way, she found that he knew her secret—and Donald's. Could he understand Donald's strange silence any better than she? That was a question impossible for her to ask.

The work went on after that much as before, save that David hired less work done, and set the boys who were at the Pines regularly-appointed tasks. He was methodical, and each was compelled to do the work appointed him, or else suffer the penalty that followed each

neglected duty. The entire charge of the boys when outside the house had been given to him, which Angela found was a great relief to herself. Fortunately, they stood considerably in awe of him. He was a man of few words, usually saying just what he meant with least possible circumlocution. He had trained his own children in a silent way to submit to the old-fashioned obedience that men of heroic mould have been in the habit of exercising over their children since the days of Abraham, and he believed similar treatment was just what these hitherto untrained youths most needed.

Lindsay complained that it was not fair to let him work just as hard as he ever did without pay, but Angela knew that what he did was done from love, and he had a recompense better than silver or gold. It was a necessity now to keep the children much longer at the Pines than in former years. Nearly all the available places had been supplied within a radius of twenty miles; this was matter both for regret and rejoicing, since by keeping them so long under her own care she could the better train them to meet the temptations of the outside world; but when she reflected on the numbers of poor, friendless children still left in the city with few to hold them

back from destruction, it grieved her. The work she was able to do was so limited compared with what might be done, if others would do even half as much as she, no wonder she sometimes grew discouraged; but seeing the few that had been saved encouraged her to go on, doing a little work. Ten boys and girls rescued from a life of degradation and transformed into genuine Christians, might mean a thousand saved a hundred years hence. She therefore reckoned her success in the future rather than the present.

Her first importations were very nearly grown to men's and women's estate. It began to make her feel quite an old woman when Mrs. Ingledorf whispered that they might have a wedding before very long, William Kay being now a stalwart young fellow, who had illustrated the virtue of generous diet in his own person. It was matter of great rejoicing to the Ingledorfs that their adopted son and daughter were likely to remain with them for life.

Whether it was from the very faithful way in which Angela had tried to indoctrinate the young folk with her own views regarding dram drinking, and the use of tobacco, or because of their native good sense, she could not tell, but so far as she could learn, not one of them used those

poisons in any form. Whenever opportunity offered she exercised all her powers of oratory in abusing those vile compounds. While the lads looked and listened — for their eyes were as keen as their ears — she seemed to every one of them fully as beautiful as their wildest dreams of angelhood could picture, and then so eager about their future that they were ready to make any promises she desired. Sometimes these promises were not easily kept, and her tender, pleading voice seemed sounding in their ears when temptation was strongest, and to be able to look her in the face and say truthfully that they had not broken their promise, meant a great deal to them. She had expended more brain power in studying the effects of alcohol and tobacco on the fine mechanism that God created last, and pronounced so good, than on Greek or Latin, and consequently could apply her knowledge of those subjects to excellent purpose.

Years after the boys used to say that her temperance talks were the most convincing they ever listened to, but she never asked for any broader platform than the fireside.

The old feeling of loneliness was gradually passing out of her life; there were so many boys and girls now through the country to greet

her with much the same warm affection that mothers only receive, since she was in the truest sense a mother to them all.

She had come at last to call herself Sister Angela. The thought to do so had always been in her heart since Dora had timidly addressed her in that way. It occurred to her that if these children, some of them without kindred—and those who had not were usually deserving of least pity—could realize that she claimed them as brothers and sisters, it might help them to respect themselves—incite them to attempt being worthy of such recognition.

Many a friendless waif at the public schools threw back the taunt from contemptuous school-fellows that Sister Angela thought enough of them to let them call her sister, and she was the first lady in the land. They could not be long in the same house with Lindsay without having that latter fact duly impressed on their minds. Sometimes when Angela was made the confidant of their trials she was glad that, among her different belongings, she had been gifted with what the world calls fine birthright claims; more, however, for the help it was to others not so well favored, than for any particular satisfaction she drew from it herself.

She was wise enough to know that it is our individual self, and not ancestors whose "bones are dust," that makes us worthy of special honor, although ancestors are a very necessary and excellent institution, while we all have them of one fashion or another. A God-fearing, pure-living peasant ancestry may leave their descendants a happier legacy in their keener power whereby to enjoy the best gifts of two worlds than esquires or royalties can transmit to theirs. It is not so much the abundance of our possessions as the faculty we may have for taking the best out of what falls to us. Who has not seen some barefoot boy with a few flapping rags by way of toilet, in the green lanes, far in the heart of the country, take greatly more satisfaction out of a rude cart, the wheels continually wobbling off, which with the help of an older brother, or friendly schoolmate, he had manufactured out of the family woodpile, than city children in dainty velvet garments, with their expensive playthings, yet of whose modes of construction they were as ignorant as we children of a larger growth are of the laws that regulate the internal polity of the fixed stars?

CHAPTER XXI.

A PARTING.

ANGELA was one of the busiest women in Longhurst. She knew the luxury of finding every day too short, and this not because she was eager to add to her own worldly accumulations, but because she saw so much that needed to be done for others. To increase her cares Lindsay's health for the past few months had been gradually failing. One duty after another was regretfully given up — always with a word of apology, and the assurance that in a few days she would resume the accustomed task again. She would not see a doctor, holding the profession in great contempt, but at last Angela brought one unknown to her. He was a rising physician in a neighboring town, whom she heard spoken of as one of the most promising men in the profession.

He came ostensibly as a guest, while Lindsay was considerably flattered by the interest this

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good-looking, nice-spoken young man took in her health. She entered into particulars about her symptoms generally, and wondered why he looked so grave when she concluded her recital of physical ills; afterward she was annoyed with herself, as well as surprised, that she should have talked so freely to a strange young man, probably another admirer of Angela's, who made much of her for reasons of his own. But when he came at frequent intervals, and brought her doses of medicine that he assured her were just what she needed, all of which she obediently swallowed, she was more mystified than ever. It is true she saw that he looked very happy when Angela came into the room, while his eyes followed her with a meaning that Lindsay understood as well as any other daughter of Eve, but after all she could not help thinking that it was to see her particularly that he came so often, especially at times when he was certain Angela would be absent from home. She decided at last that he was the finest specimen of his sex it had ever been her lot to meet, while the maternal instincts, which are planted in every true woman's heart, whether dormant or developed, in her case warmed toward him tenderly.

"If I was a young woman, and good-looking

like some, I'd marry him quicker than any one I ever saw. I wish other folks could see as I do," she said querulously to Angela.

"If I had had a son like him I'd have most idolized him. To tell the truth, I've often thought mothers were foolishly fond of their boys. I never understood how warming to a heart up in years a strong young man could be. Do take my advice, Angela. It's a sight better than living alone as I have done."

"You would have me care for the man I was going to marry?"

"Oh! girls are much too particular; them what takes most anybody, whether he's their choice or not, seems to get on as well as the rest. I've often noticed love matches don't turn out better than the rest."

"We cannot always tell which are love marriages."

"Well, if I had my life to live over, I'd marry a ditcher, providing he was honest and true; but when I was young I was that proud I wanted a gentleman, and they are a class of people that mostly craves their own kind; but girls are powerful silly."

Angela trembled for Lindsay's recently awakened sentiment should she discover that this

beautiful young man had only a professional interest in her. If she never got well, she might not learn her mistake, but Angela could not, with calmness, think of such a thing as that; for with all her brusqueness she loved the rugged, strong woman only second to one other human being.

The doctor had told the Wardells that Lindsey was past all human help. That insidious malady that seems peculiarly the foe of this generation, Bright's disease, had for months been sapping the reserve powers of the once hardy frame. She had only one remedy for sickness—her own powerful resolution. She had exercised that day by day until at last it had to succumb to the deadly weakness which made even the slightest exertion a weariness. The turning-point had been passed where medical skill could have met and matched the disease, before the doctor had been summoned; now the restless spirit fretted at the lethargy settling on all its powers, but had to learn the lesson God sets most of us. Angela could never find courage to ask the doctor what he thought of his patient; the look on his face the first day he sat chatting so gently with Lindsay sealed her lips.

One might be surprised at her unwillingness

to believe any but favorable decisions, but Lindsay stood to her now in place of all her own kindred, most of whom had passed away before her eyes had opened on the scenes of life: her grandmother, that stately dame who prided herself so much on her birth and training, keeping all the country side at a distance because of their lack of these essential qualities; the gentle mother whose ancestral branches shot even higher into the cold, upper regions of aristocratic vegetation than the family could boast with whom she allied herself; the dignified mother-in-law, condoning the humility of soul which made the younger woman recognize a pious and industrious housemaid as a sister beloved, because of the distinction and wealth such alliance had brought into her own family. The pain that proud woman exhibited when this bright, gracious creature, so like Angela's self, gave up her life and left in exchange the tiny infant, struck other women who had daughters-in-law as very peculiar. She, too, had passed away before Angela's recollection, but Lindsay had talked so much to her about both women, describing their peculiarities in such a realistic way, her remarks illustrated by the excellent likeness of each of them hanging in the parlor, that Angela seemed to feel fairly

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well acquainted with both of them. Lindsay had, in her girlhood, been a maid at Ashcroft Hall, where Angela's ancestors had lived in considerable state since the stormy days when King John reluctantly affixed his signature to the Magna Charta.

She loved to describe those long-vanished scenes and the family splendor, and her joy at being sent across the sea to Mistress Annie — Angela's grandmother, who had followed her lover to the New World. All through her childhood and youth, Angela had listened to these stories, while it had been a cherished hope with Lindsay, from the time she saw the budding grace and beauty of the girl, that she should go back among her own and find a mate who was worthy of her. That hope had been growing fainter year after year, until now when she would have made a very inferior individual, as regards family connection, welcome, only so far, however, as honesty and sobriety were concerned; on these qualities she insisted firmly.

There were long hours of sleeplessness for her now, when all the world around was hushed in slumber; at such seasons fancy was busiest. Slowly the question was forcing itself upon her mind, Could she ever be well again? Ever be

able to take up the burdens that were wearing so heavily on the girl whom she had always shielded from household cares? Other questions, too, came thronging about her in those lonely vigils. How was she prepared for the long and unknown journey over a road no guide book has ever described? Patsey's old question returned with wearisome iteration: "Are you converted?"

Her anxiety became so deep at last, that she asked for Patsey.

"I mean David Grant that now is. He made a remark to me once that I have never forgotten, and I want to ask him about it," she remarked mysteriously. And Angela at once complied with her request.

When he entered her room Lindsay was surprised at the change in his appearance. He had been abroad, and she had not seen him for a long time, and in the meantime the loose-jointed youth had shot up into a tall, well-formed man, but with something of the boyish look still in the strong, resolute face.

Angela left them together, considerably mystified at Lindsay's eagerness for a private conference. Could it be possible that she did not expect to get well again, and had been seized with a natural desire to bequeath her goodly store of

earnings to her relations over the sea? She would know that David was sufficiently versed in law to attend safely to her last will and testament.

They were closeted together a long time, Angela too busy, however, with her appointed tasks to brood very deeply on the perplexing question, but her heart was, nevertheless, in a tremor of frightened expectancy. She felt sure David would tell her what Lindsay's business might be. He might also tell her what she was fighting with herself not to believe.

At last she saw him coming to her. She was in the garden tying up the flowers into bouquets to send to the city, where they found a ready sale; they had been pressed into a mission of helpfulness, along with all the other products of the farm.

Angela watched the manly-looking young fellow, so brave and independent in his bearing, as he came toward her, with a feeling of deep satisfaction. To transform the dregs of humanity into such noble specimens of the race should certainly atone for the work she was at that moment engaged in.

David began cutting the stalks and arranging the flowers into groups that charmed even Angela's fastidious taste, while she waited anxiously

for him to begin the conversation. At last she could bear the suspense no longer.

"What do you think of Lindsay?"

He answered her question by asking another.

"Did you know for what purpose she sent for me?"

"No." The face looking so intently into his suddenly grew paler.

"You know, of course, that she is near her end?"

"Who says that she is?" she asked hotly.

"The doctor — everybody; surely you were not ignorant of what is patent to every one who has seen her?"

"Was there no one who cared enough for me to tell me?" she sobbed. "Does she know it herself?"

"I told her just now; I think she must have believed so herself, or she would not have sent for me."

"Did you write her will?"

"I am to do so after dinner." He paused, as if reluctant to repeat what had passed between them — why Lindsay had sent for him. "Do you remember a conversation we had together a good many years ago — down by the edge of the pine wood, one summer evening?"

"Yes."

"It led, if you remember, almost directly to my conversion. I have never tried to thank you for the interest you took in me that night; I never shall be able to do so as I could wish until we meet in another world where we shall have language deep enough for our utmost need. If you remember, I asked Lindsay the next morning if she had ever been converted — telling her what had just taken place in my heart. She was very angry with me at the time, but it seems that question I asked so long ago has been vexing her of late; she wanted me to tell her all about it. I have found that in telling her I have myself been helped; mingling with worldly people is apt to make some of us forget the sterner realities of death and eternity."

Angela was listening, her whole eager soul shining in her eyes.

"Could you make her understand?" she asked.

"I cannot tell. Do you remember you told me that evening we could never find the Lord so easily as in our youth? I was thinking of that while I talked with her; but with God all things are possible."

Angela sank down on a garden chair, her

hands idly folded in her lap, her interest in everything gone save that old, tried friend, so soon to cross the boundary line dividing us from that other country.

"Why did she not speak to me?"

"She did not want to grieve you, but was wishing so much that you would talk to her personally."

Angela was silent. "Had she been neglecting a known duty?" she asked herself.

"It was better for her to speak first. The fact that she conquered her proud nature sufficiently to speak to me will be a great help to her. I believe the two hardest steps for us to take toward salvation is acknowledging our need, and believing that Christ is able and willing to save us."

"She has taken one of those steps. God help her to take every other," Angela murmured fervently.

After dinner David was again closeted with Lindsay, coming out at last to get legal witnesses for the will he had just drawn. All about the premises were more or less her beneficiaries, save the housemaids, and these were taken into the sick room, both of them looking very solemn and somewhat alarmed, but they affixed their signa-

tures to the paper, and when it was done there was a shade less of anxiety on Lindsay's waxen features. David found it impossible to preserve his calmness when Angela slipped into the room and threw herself on the bed beside her oldest and truest friend.

"O, Lindsay! are you going to leave me alone?" she sobbed; "you have always been so faithful to me, and now I shall have no one."

"Yes, dear; you will have the Lord, and then there are all these dear boys and girls who love you nearly as well as I do. You won't be lonely some long."

"No one will quite take your place."

"I think it is all for the best; David says so."

She talked calmly, with frequent pauses, for her strength was far spent, but her mind remained as clear as ever. Angela held the thin, hard hand, grown so in faithful service to her and her family, but the tears kept falling more softly now.

David had taken a chair at her side. He longed to speak some comforting word to her who had been mother and friend to him for so many years; to whom he owed everything he held best in this world. She must have felt the unspoken sympathy in his heart, for she turned to him at last, and putting her hand in his said:

"What should I do now if it were not for you and Mark—and all the rest," she added, as if just remembering that the others had a right to be included also.

Lindsay had fallen asleep, but Angela did not move.

The lights were brought in; there was work that must be attended to, and with a heavy heart she turned from that restful quiet.

For nearly a month Lindsay lingered on, then fell calmly on sleep—the sleep that knows no earthly waking.

CHAPTER XXII.

A MEETING.

THE autumn winds were sighing gloomily through the pine woods, the autumn leaves drifting down to enrich the mould from which they sprang.

Angela sometimes felt, now that Lindsay was gone, that the care was more than she could endure. Hired help at the best was a poor dependence; frequently the best was not to be had. Wardell took more and more of the burdens upon himself, even his wife and Jessie coming to the rescue in times of pressing emergency, but all the care of the house was upon her, beside the oversight of the children. She was matron, teacher and housekeeper all in one, but she bore up bravely, and no one ever heard her utter a complaint.

One evening when the storm was raging fiercely without, she sat by her own fireside,

busy with her accounts, and feeling glad that all her household, dumb and human, were in their appointed shelter, when there came a gentle tap at the door. She bade the applicant enter, thinking it might be one of the maids with letters or a message, and went on reckoning up a column of figures that would persist in coming out larger than she expected. She heard the door open, and a footstep on the thick carpet, and half-consciously waited for the person to speak. Surprised at last at the silence, she turned her face to the door, when she was startled to see a man standing beside her.

She looked at him for an instant, her fear turning to gladness as she murmured, "It is Donald!"

She held out her hand, which was instantly clasped in both of his, while she stood looking into the bronzed, bearded face.

"Can it be really Donald, or am I mistaken?" she asked at last. This tall, distinguished-looking man certainly bore a slight resemblance to her friend.

"Yes, it is Donald; your Donald, Angela."

She withdrew her hand and placed an easy chair for him by the fire.

"We were not expecting you. When did you arrive?" she asked.

"An hour ago."

"Have you had tea?"

"Yes."

"Will you permit me to take your wet coat?"

"Thank you."

His answers were certainly very brief; not an easy person to entertain, by any means.

She busied herself hanging the wet coat on a chair, and added more wood to the old-fashioned, open fire, making a cheery blaze that of itself should have thawed out the most silent tongue, and then with a strange feeling of constraint, she sat down on the opposite side of the fireplace.

"Did you come across in the last steamer?" she ventured timidly to inquire.

"Yes."

After another pause she broke the silence again.

"Did you not find the passage rough? We have had stormy weather all along the coast."

"We had a stormy voyage."

They came to another pause, and again Angela made a further attempt at entertainment.

"How glad your parents will be to have you with them at Christmas!"

There was a thrill of gladness in her own voice.

that was like a gleam of sunshine to the man sitting opposite her.

"Are you glad, Angela?" He was standing beside her now, looking down into the pale, upturned face.

"Yes."

"I have come to release you from your promise."

"You do not need. I have no thought of marrying." She spoke sadly.

"You must not say that, Angela; I have worked as few men have done to win a position worth offering you. The time has come that I dare to tell you something of the love that has been in my heart all these years."

"Was it because of that you never told me?" What a world of regret there was in the low-spoken words.

"There could be no other reason."

"O, Donald! and all the time you were so far above me; and now it is too late."

"It shall not be too late; nothing shall come between us any longer — nothing but death, Angela." He spoke passionately.

"I have other duties now; did they not tell you?"

"Your highest duty is to yourself and your

plighted husband. "All these years I have trusted you — kept myself pure for you. I shall not cross the ocean without you."

What a wave of gladness enfolded her as she listened to his impetuous voice! This was more than parents or brothers and sisters — than all kindred beside. She could follow him anywhere, and no place would be lonely with him at her side. And then the thought of what others would miss because of her joy, dashed the cup of bliss from her lips.

"O, Donald! how can I leave those who need me so much more than you need me? Your life will be very successful, very perfect without me. And they have no one to care for them."

The eyes gazing at him so wistfully now, were full of tears.

"You know, Donald, I have loved you better than all. I have so wanted to belong to you, even while I did not know you cared for me in that way. Not very long ago I decided always to be single, so that I might help others, and I have given myself now to that work."

"You gave, then, what belonged to me. I meant everything in that request I made, and which you promised to keep, and I trusted you — worked with the expectation of receiving my

reward. There are others who can do this work; can you not leave some one in your place?"

There was a sudden catching of the breath as she looked up eagerly.

"If your father and mother would come here and take charge — O, Donald! if I could only go with you! only be sure that you care enough for me to want me with you always, how glad I should be; but you are so learned, and I" —

He stopped her there.

"You must never say anything against my wife in my presence, Angela; I will not permit it from any human lips, not even yours."

She gave him a puzzled look.

"Do you not remember how you used to assure me you could never really respect me if I was not clever and studious?"

"I did not understand womenkind then, Angela; did not know the grandeur and beauty of a pure woman's soul — how it surpasses our highest culture. I am only amazed that one like you should care to mate with me; but, darling, I will be very tender to you."

The look of supreme content she bestowed upon him made him forget the years that had divided them.

"I hope I won't be jealous of your specimens

any more ; but, dear, I won't interfere with your work ; you have trained me so that I will make a pretty obedient and not very exacting wife. A few kind words now and then will make me happy."

The sweet humility and patience in face and voice gave him a very unusual and unexpected moisture about the eyes.

She looked at him presently a little sorrowfully.

"I had forgotten ; we have been permitting ourselves these happy fancies, and yet we do not know if they can be fulfilled."

"They shall be fulfilled, unless death interposes." He spoke with something of the old sternness in voice and face that she remembered so well.

"I can only leave my children and the work here in your father's care. Unless he and your mother consent to come here and live, I cannot leave the Pines."

"Do not speak that way, Angela ; I shall doubt if you ever have loved me."

"Duty must come before everything, Donald ; you have lived without me all these years ; have missed me far less than my children would have done — will miss me in the coming years less than they. Could you respect me if I left all and followed you ?"

"It is impossible for me to think of you under any condition in life in which I should not respect you."

"With that assurance I think I can manage to be content." Her voice trembled a little.

"It is useless giving ourselves this unnecessary pain; my father will be glad to come here; his whole heart is in your work. His letters have contained little else than descriptions of you and your work; even if I had been fickle enough to forget you, his letters would have kept your memory green. Angela, you can never understand how I have longed for this hour — dreamed of it, dreaded lest it might never come. I trusted a great deal to a young girl's fancy."

"If you had only told me, so that I could really have been sure. I made up my mind at last that it was all a mistake; but I kept my heart empty for you."

"Have I not made plain my reason for not speaking? I could not ask you to link your fortune to an obscure, penniless youth. Have you been reading the papers lately?" he asked, somewhat irrelevantly.

"Very little; I have been too busy," she said, looking mystified.

"My father did not tell you, then? but no,

that would have been unlike him. Angela, I have written the book you asked for long ago, and it is likely to make my fortune. You can choose the mansion or the cabin, as you please. In either case, I shall be able to gratify your request."

"O, Donald! I am so glad for your sake. Can I understand the book? Did you bring it for me to read?"

"I wanted to talk myself. I will give the book a chance some other time."

She was very quiet, apparently forgetting even Donald's dear presence. He watched her closely. The mood was a new one even to him, but all her ways and moods fascinated him, and just then books, or ambition, or the great world's praise, counted very little with him as he sat with her at his side, in the supreme content that years of waiting brought.

"I wish Lindsay could know! What she so longed for has come just a little too late. Oh! I am so glad that I shall have the company I like henceforth."

Her sentence ended with a sigh of deep content.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE END.

DONALD was not mistaken. His father accepted the charge, though with many misgivings, refusing, however, any remuneration for his and his wife's services, save their board and lodging.

"It is just the Lord's doings," David said reverently, when entering upon his duties. "I have always wanted to do something for him, but my way has been hedged up."

Angela thought he had done a great deal in giving to the world such a son as Donald — one who had already stood before princes and been honored by them, for, by degrees, she had drawn from him something of the story of his successes; but these had a measure of pain for her as well as rejoicing, since it only served to widen the distance between his acquirements and her own. From their earliest acquaintance she had read his character correctly, instinctively recognizing gifts

of intellect and character different from all her other acquaintances, and even now she could hardly realize that these, in their full development, had all been laid at her feet; that he had chosen her, longed to have her for a life-long companion and friend. The honor conferred on her by this selection seemed so out of proportion to her deserts she could hardly realize it.

Donald insisted that they should have the best day in the whole year for their wedding day, and, although it was just at hand, their Christmas celebration included the marriage celebration too. All her boys and girls from far and near were invited, while the preparations for their entertainment were more abundant than elaborate. An hundred and more of these were gathered in the large parlor and library, which seemed to have been planned on purpose for this occasion. The marriage ceremony took place at midday, so as to allow those within easy driving distance time to come and return the same day; the rest had to crowd into whatever empty spaces they could find for themselves. The faces gathered there reminded one of an April day — smiles and tears commingled.

To some of them it seemed impossible that Angela could be spared and the work still go on,

but she had such faith in David and his wife, that she had actually persuaded herself, and any one who would listen to her, that the change would be a fortunate one for the children. It is hardly necessary to say that Donald, for reasons of his own, encouraged her in the belief.

Angela received few gifts of much value, but some of them were consecrated in a manner not usual with wedding presents, tears of thankfulness from the grateful bride adding to their costliness. They went, some of them, as low as a dime, and inclosed in an envelope with a few pathetic lines, praying that she would buy something that she could always have with her to remember them by; a request she fulfilled by purchasing a pretty ring, the necessary amount to do this supplemented by Donald, thereby enhancing its value.

As the months wore on, the messages passing to and fro between the Pines and Angela were a comfort alike to both parties. David was inclined to give only the happier side of his experiences with the work she had bequeathed to him, while she believed that her pathway was all sunny, for Donald fulfilled, even better than she had expected, the promise made to her the night of their betrothal.

Her happiness was complete when she sent to the proud grandparents an exquisite picture of herself, which she regarded, however, as a very indifferent work of art, save for the tiny figure robed in lace and lawn, surmounted by a pink baby face, which she held in her arms; a bit of humanity of the most wonderful kind imaginable, since it was Donald's boy.

Other children in the great German city where she lived had already learned to love, and with very good reason, the beautiful lady who talked to them in sweet, broken accents; for here, too, Angela found many a youthful life in danger of being utterly marred and shattered by sin, and which needed help fully as much as any in her native land. But she did not here meet the indifference which had characterized her work in Longhurst.

